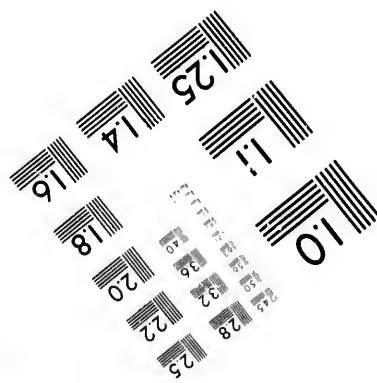
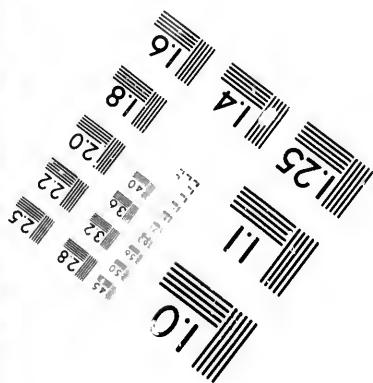
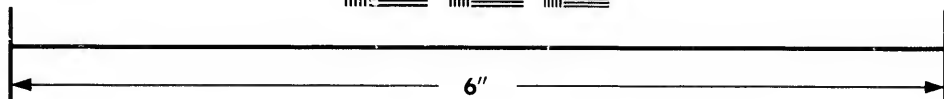
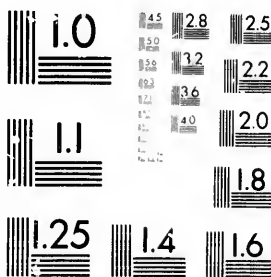


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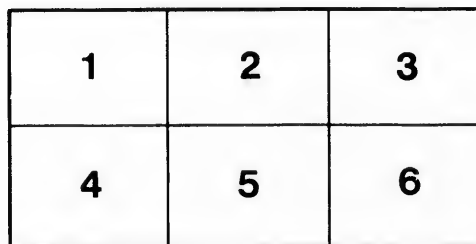
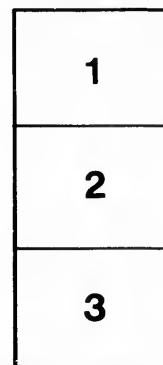
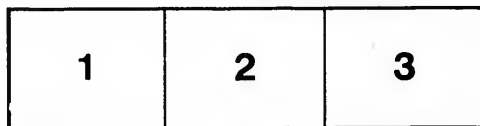
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A

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

IN OUR

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BEING

A Number of Letters Published

IN THE

TORONTO "MAIL"

BY

REV.. JOHN LAING, M. A., D. D.,

MINISTER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

DUNDAS, ONTARIO.

PUBLISHED BY THE NEWS COMPANY.

TORONTO:

MAIL PRINTING CO., PRINTERS, CORNER KING AND BAY STREETS.

1883.

INTRODUCTION.

That religion and morals form an important part of education all will admit. Those also who know God's Book are unanimous in affirming that even for literary purposes there is no book like the Bible. Its elevated, pure, unselfish tone; its rich, but chaste imagery; its peerless parables and allegories; its sublime, grand poetry; its history, so ancient, life-like and instructive—all combine with the transcendent and eternal importance of its chief themes, and its power to affect the life of man, to save and raise him morally and intellectually, to make the Bible the best of school-books. If the development of noble, pure, intelligent, robust manhood is the end of education, then the Bible is worth more than any other text-book in the wide world.

But objections, both theoretical and practical, to the use of God's Book in the schools are strenuously put forth. The chief of these are stated, and to some extent met, in the following letters. The best answer, however, is a fact, "a sturdy chiel that winna ding"—a fact which must convince any man who has not resolved to remain blind, viz.: that the following resolution on the subject of religious education is carried out by the School Board of the City of London, England:—"In the Schools provided by the Board the Bible shall be read, and there shall be given such instruction therefrom in the principles of morality and religion as are suited to the capacity of the children, provided that no attempt be made in any such schools to attach children to any particular denomination." Mr. Mundella states that, during three years, he had only one complaint. It was from a father who wished to withdraw his child from religious teaching, while the mother succeeded in preventing that from being done. In these schools, 300,000 pupils are thus instructed in Christian morals and religion, and Mr. Mundella adds that, practically, the whole school children of England, numbering 4,700,000 are receiving religious instruction.

In this connection, the following extract from the speech of Mr. Forster, in the British House of Commons, is most significant:—"The first and most important business (of the schools) was to give a thorough good elementary education—reading, writing, and ciphering—and he trusted that the day was far distant when there would not be alongside that a Scriptural education. (Cheers). The Act of 1870 had not resulted in a purely secular system, but, as he believed, in a more thorough Scriptural and religious teaching than existed before." (Renewed cheers). Thus, the British Commons showed by applause their appreciation of religious and Scriptural teaching.

What is done in London can certainly be done in Toronto; what is possible in England is possible in Canada, and the best corroboration of this is another fact, viz.—that the Teachers' Association of Ontario endorse the proposal to have Biblical instruction given. These facts outweigh ten thousand hypothetical objections.

I do not now propose to discuss the fundamental ideas of education; nevertheless, simply to state the three distinct theories regarding where the promotion of education properly and primarily belongs, may help to make the position I take in these letters more intelligible:—

(1) It is said that education is properly a function of the State, and this because the State should see that its subjects are intelligent, industrious, and law-abiding. Education benefits the State, *therefore* it belongs to the State to educate.

(2) It is said that education is the proper function of the Church. This is the Roman Catholic position, as will be shown below. "Teach all nations," and because Christ commissioned the Apostles to teach the Gospel, *therefore* Bishops should conduct the education of the young.

(3) It is said that it is primarily and properly the function of parents to educate their children; and that only when parents neglect to do this should State or Church authoritatively interfere and compel parents to do their duty. The third is the position I approve. But as in modern society this duty cannot be discharged by every parent personally, parents may combine to have schools and employ teachers; still the right to say what and how the children shall be taught remains with the parents, not with Church or State. Neither Government nor Bishop should be allowed to over-ride the parent. At the same time both State and Church may properly aid parents in discharging this function. In this way national systems of education, which recognise the rights of parents and carry out their wishes are legitimate, and Church and State can combine to secure the education of all the children of the country. I need only add that clauses 9 and 10 of the Ontario School Law fully recognises this position in principle; and that the principle of popular election is intended to keep the management of each school under the control of the parents of the children as far as is consistent with efficiency.

Besides the six open letters to the Minister of Education which were published recently, the reader will find other letters written during earlier discussions on the same general question. These are given under the conviction that they throw light on the subject. I am satisfied that our Protestants are more generous than wise. They have no fear of the influence of Romanism, and are willing to leave Roman Catholics alone, under the idea that they are leaving us alone. One object that I have in view is to put this matter fairly before the public, and to ask our Protestants to consider whether things must drift if the present system is continued, and our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens are taught their religion in the State schools, while Protestants are denied the like privilege. Let me then direct attention to the position of the Roman Catholic community as to education. The following is taken from the paper read by Archbishop Lynch in Toronto in June last, to the Separate School Board:—

"The teaching on the subject of education by the Catholic Church, especially of Pope Pius IX., of blessed memory, and of his illustrious successor, Leo XIII., and of all Catholic theologians is—that Catholic children, as far as it is possible, should be educated in Catholic and unmixed schools. Kening, in his theology, recently published with the approbation of His Eminence Cardinal McCloskey, Archbishop of New York, and of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States and Canada, also teaches that those Catholic parents who send their children to Common Schools where they have schools of their own, are unworthy of the grace of the Sacraments, and that all persons who advocate the contrary are also unworthy of the Sacraments, as opposing in speech the teaching of the Church."

I have been censured both by priest and newspaper correspondent for referring to the Syllabus as if it were irrelevant in the discussion of this question, but my readers will

see that the Archbishop also feels the importance in educational questions of that famous manifesto.

The 45th clause in it gives as "a principal error of our time, which is stigmatized "in the consistorial Allocutions, Encyclicals and other Apostolical letters of our most Holy Father Pope Pius IX., the following :—'The entire direction of Public Schools "in which the youth of Christian States (Protestant?) are educated, except (to a certain "extent) in the case of Episcopal seminaries, *may* and must appertain to the civil power, "and belong to it so far that no other *authority* whatsoever shall be recognized as *hav-* "ing any right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, the arrangement of the "studies, the taking of degrees, or the choice and approval of teachers.'" This is the very position claimed for our Ontario school system which is thus condemned.

Clause 47 stigmatizes as a principal error "the best theory of civil society requires that "popular schools open to the children of all classes, and generally all public institutes, in- "structed for instruction in letters and philosophy, and for conducting the education of "the young should be *freed from* all ecclesiastical *control*, government and *interference*, "and should be fully subject to the civil and political power in conformity with the will "of rulers and the prevalent opinions of the age.'" Again we have the position of our Ontario school system condemned.

Clause 48 stigmatizes as a principal error, "This system of instructing youth, which "consists in *separating it from the Catholic faith* and from the *POWER of the Church*, "and in teaching exclusively, or at least primarily, the knowledge of natural things and "the earthly ends of social life alone, may be approved by Catholics."

ANOTHER PRINCIPLE OF OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM.

It is now evident that this stigmatizing of these opinions is an unequivocal and strong condemnation of modern systems of education. We do not wonder then that the lay teachers of Quebec felt it necessary to ask their Archbishop for protection against some of the clergy, who, they say, "wish, notwithstanding our protests, to apply to us "the provisions of the 45, 47 and 48 of the Syllabus and consider us as infidels and "enemies." We are also prepared to learn that the Archbishop in his answer said :— "By its divine constitution (the Church's) it is its *right* and duty to see that the faith "and morals of Christian youth (Protestant included) are protected in the schools, and "that these precious gifts are not exposed to the danger of being lost; and as there can "never be any right against the right, the State cannot fetter the Church when faith "and morals are concerned. For this purpose, *the church must have a right to enter "the schools not only by tolerance, but in virtue of its divine mission.*" What bolder, stronger, more defiant claim of right can the Church set forth as against a national system of education, free from clerical interference and control? Thus clearly and unmistakably is set forth the claim of a Divine right and authority for Bishops to direct the education of the young in a Christian State, not excepting Protestant States and the obligation to disregard any regulation of the state which contravenes this alleged right. Surely we are excusable if we disbelieve this or allow it to be explained away. To refuse to see is culpable blindness.

When the "Marmion" affair came upon us this claim was squarely put forth by Archbishop Lynch, and vindicated by others of the clergy, admitted and acted upon by the Minister of Education, and *approved by the Globe*. Witness the following—the Arch-

bishop, as reported by the *Globe*, said on Sunday, in the Cathedral: "As a Catholic Bishop he was bound to see to the morality of the Catholic students, and as a large number of such students were in attendance at Universities and High Schools they (the bishops) must see to the literature placed in their hands. They condemned it (the book). . . . They remonstrated with the Education Department." Accordingly, Minister Crooks then and there agreed to suspend the use of "Marmion" in the High Schools. So, when a Roman Catholic bishop, in the exercise of what he is pleased to regard as *Jus Divinum*, "condemned" a book and "remonstrated;" at once, and without consultation with any Protestant, the Minister of Education, the head of our school system, obeyed—obeyed the prelate and interdicted the book. Mark well, *not a single remonstrance of any kind had reached the Minister then, except that of the Archbishop*, and he acknowledged the right of Episcopal interference and control. This conduct of the Minister was thus approvingly spoken of by the Editor of the *Globe*, before the heat of discussion had begun to torment him:—"In a mixed community like ours, the feelings—even the prejudices—of important religious bodies cannot rightly be disregarded, and the Minister must be held to have exercised a sound discretion in interdicting the book." Well done for a Reform journal! The Minister was right in yielding to the "prejudices" of Roman Catholics, when they took the form of the Episcopal condemnation and remonstrance by the recognised head of the church in this Province acting *Jure Divino*!

But we have more than this. Shortly after, Bishop Cleary came to the rescue, and publicly declared, as reported:—"The Church reserved the *right to dictate* in regard to "the religion of her children, to make suggestions affecting their moral education. "When the *bishops* could not do this in the discharge of their functions and duty, peace would be destroyed, and a lamentable state of affairs exist." That is, in the public schools.

Thus frankly and unqualifiedly was the claim put forth (1) that the Church has the divine right to educate (2) that the bishops are the parties on whom this right devolves (3) that they have a right, *as bishops*, to interfere with and so far control our State schools; and all this while no such right is conceded to Protestants.

When, further, we remember that Pius IX. has also, in the Syllabus, stigmatized as a principal error, "The Church has not power of availing herself of *force* or any direct "or *indirect temporal power*." Thus avowing the purpose of using any political advantage she may have to gain her own ends, we can see clearly what to expect. If the Roman Catholic Church in Ontario can in any way get the control of our State Schools she will get it and keep it, nor will she tolerate any teaching which will tend to maintain Protestant truth and Protestant liberty. Surely it becomes us Protestants to be awake and not shut our eyes to facts.

I have only further to say that I have no wish to interfere in any way with our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens or their education. Gladly do I accord them every civil right, and I rejoice in the prosperity of their schools. But as their schools are free from Protestant interference, so our schools also must be free from Roman Catholic ecclesiastical interference and domination in any form or matter whatsoever. Our law has given the Roman Catholics Separate Schools. We were told when that was obtained it was to be a "finality." Now we find that in this promise we were deceived; and the Archbishop asks and presses the Government for the full development of a Separate System. This

may all be granted. Perhaps to do so is inevitable. It would be a less evil than the present inequality. But surely Protestants will insist on equal rights, and on being saved from the interference and control of Bishops by virtue of a claim to a Divine right.

If it were of any use I might appeal to the generosity of our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, but it would be in vain to do so. They are helpless; the Pope has spoken; it is theirs simply to obey. When the infallible head claims as a divine right the power to interfere with and control our Public Schools as far as they can directly or indirectly, our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens are unable to help us. They dare not resist the Pope's claim of supreme authority. With Roman Catholics we have no strife; but we must fight our own battle against the Hierarchy, and must meet their unceasing efforts to concuss our legislators by means of the Roman Catholic vote under penalty of deprivation of the sacraments.

I rejoice to know that I am not alone in this effort on behalf of religious instruction for our children. I wish that those who have so ably written on other and more important aspects of the subject would press their views on the attention of the Protestant community. Until such a pressure is brought upon the Local Government, whether it remains Reform or becomes Conservative, we cannot hope to secure for our dear children the precious privilege we ask.



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OPEN LETTERS

ON

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

 (SEE SCHOOL LAW CLAUSE X.)

To the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario:

HONORABLE SIR,—Permit me in a letter addressed to you, as the responsible head of our educational system, to direct the attention of the public to matters which are powerfully affecting the character of our people, for good or for evil, and of which the full fruits will not be seen for a generation to come.

With many friends who have witnessed your efforts in the past to make our educational system a success, I take this opportunity to express my sorrow that through severe affliction you are at present unable to discharge your duties, and also my hope that your health may yet be fully restored. While I cannot approve of all that has been enacted under your administration, or of the ever-recurring changes and modifications in the school law and regulations which so perplex those who are engaged in education, yet I believe them to be well intended—if not always wise—attempts to meet supposed defects in our provincial system. To some of these defects I may hereafter refer more in detail. I will here only state my conviction that we have had too much legislation and regulation, and that many trustees and teachers, who are not imbeciles, think that they might safely be left a wider margin for the exercise of common sense, and not have their hands tied in every little matter by irritating, and oft-times ambiguously worded, regulations, which they find it necessary at times even to disregard, in the interests of education.

The first thing of an unsatisfactory nature which I venture to bring under your notice is that of moral and Religious Instruction in our schools. Of the importance of such instruction I will not speak. Others have written largely and well on the subject, and have shown that it is an indispensable element of a liberal Christian education. Besides, our law admits the desirableness of such instruction, and provides for it. It is only to be regretted that existing regulations make the provisions of the Act nugatory to a large extent, and when an attempt is made to impart such instruction in our public schools, ensure partial if not complete failure.

The discussions on education of last year have shown that the opponents of the introduction of the Bible into our schools as a book of instruction rest their arguments,

among other things, although perhaps, chiefly, on the fact that our public schools are non-denominational and belong alike to citizens of every creed. Hence they assert it would be unjust to teach in these schools, supported by public funds, anything upon which all citizens are not agreed; that all are agreed on a secular education, but many do not agree to Christian morals and religion being taught; and therefore only secular instruction should be given. Particularly we have been told that in many parts of Ontario the Roman Catholic community support our public schools, and have, therefore, rights in our schools equally with Protestants; so that it is only right, to use the language of the late lamented Father Stafford, that "nothing anti-Papel" should be taught in our schools. We are further told that our schools are not Protestant, although the Separate Schools are Roman Catholic, and that every Roman Catholic can claim the privileges of our Public and High Schools. Now, honorable sir, I wish to look at this objection in its bearing on the relative position of the Protestant majority and the Roman Catholic minority in Ontario. The Venerable Archbishop Lynch lately expressed himself thus:—

"The Catholics of the Province of Quebec, yielding to the scruples of their Protestant fellow-citizens, permitted them to have Separate Schools, with a Separate Board of Education, a Normal School, and in fine all the privileges which the Common Schools of Ontario enjoy. * * * We hope that our Protestant fellow-citizens will yet feel proud to be as liberal to their Catholic fellow-subjects as the Catholics are to the Protestants of Quebec. *Much advance has already been made and we hope for more.*"

The italics are mine. I have no doubt the Archbishop here states his convictions as to the state of things, and a hope, not, perhaps, without some good ground, of the extension of Roman Catholic Separate Schools. Let me then most respectfully call attention to a difference in the school law of the two Provinces which completely destroys any argument to be drawn from alleged injustice to Roman Catholics. In Québec, education is not a department of the Government as in Ontario, but is under the charge of a Superintendent and Council of Public Instruction. The Council consists of two sections or committees, known as the Roman Catholic Committee and the Protestant Committee. The former consists of all the bishops or administrators of Roman Catholic dioceses in the province, and an equal number of Roman Catholic gentlemen appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council; the latter of eight Protestant gentlemen appointed by the Governor-General. To these committees respectively is committed the management of the Roman Catholic and Protestant schools. This distinction between the two religions is carried out in every particular. In this way it comes that Protestant and Roman Catholic are equal in the eye of the law, and have equal privileges, with distinct school corporations, examining boards, books, &c., &c.

Another notable thing is that while to the Roman Catholic Protestant Schools are common or public schools from the lowest to the highest grade, it depends upon which religion in any municipality has the majority, whether the "*dissentient*" (not separated) school is Roman Catholic or Protestant. If the majority is Roman Catholic, the Protestants, provided they have twenty children of school age, may have a dissentient school, and if the majority is Protestant the Roman Catholic School is dissentient in the same way. Further, no one, clergyman or layman, professing the other creed can, without permission of the school authorities, in any way interfere with the parish school or the dissentient school, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant. And this is fair, equal-handed justice. But the case in Ontario is very different. (1) Here the Public

Schools are not Protestant, but the Separate Schools are Roman Catholic. (2) The Public Schools are not administered and controlled exclusively by Protestants, as they wish and desire for their interests; while the Separate Schools are managed exclusively by Roman Catholics, and as the bishops direct. (3) Roman Catholics can obtain Separate Schools in any part of Ontario; but Protestants can obtain them only when a Roman Catholic teacher is employed. Also, in other respects the law bears against Protestant Separate Schools and favours Roman Catholic Separate Schools. (4) Every Roman Catholic has the right to support and so far control the Public School, while no Protestant can interfere with a Roman Catholic Separate School. (5) Every priest and bishop is by law a visitor of the Public Schools, but no Protestant minister can visit a Roman Catholic Separate School. (6) As in Quebec the clergy, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, decide what religious books are to be used, so in Ontario the Bishop appoints the books to be used which are then authorized, and thus the children are taught the tenets and religious practices of Romanism; but Protestant ministers have no such rights, and the tenets and practices of the reformed faith are not taught. Other points of advantage conceded by, or if you wish "wrung from" the Legislature by the bishops, might be specified, but the six mentioned may now suffice.

Now, sir, is this equality? If our Ontario school law were to recognize the fact, as Archbishop Lynch puts it, that "there are two grand divisions of Christians in this country, the Catholic and Protestant," and were conformed to that acknowledged state of society, then we might hope to have rights and privileges equal to those conceded to the Roman Catholics. But our law professes not to know the creed of citizens in educational matters, and then makes an exception of nearly one-fourth of the population favouring their religious desires and claims. The law ignores Protestantism and individual Protestant churches, and refuses to allow them to have schools, at the same time that it acknowledges Roman Catholicism, and concedes everything it claims as a right. Father Stafford, with his clear insight, discerned this distinctly, and thus frankly stated it:—"The educational system of Ontario is not the work of Catholics, consequently they are not to blame if Protestants are deprived of their rights to teach Protestantism in their schools." In the same letter he strongly contends that it is the right of Roman Catholics to have everything offensive to them on religious grounds excluded from the Public Schools (including, of course, the Protestant Bible), because some Roman Catholic money goes to the support of the schools, because many Roman Catholic pupils attend these schools, and many Roman Catholics are employed as teachers in the schools. All this simply means that Roman Catholics have their own schools, subsidized from public funds, exclusively to themselves, and controlled by their clergy, and also enjoy equal rights with Protestants in all the Public Schools.

In light of the above facts, it is clear as noon-day that in Ontario it is the Protestants and not the Roman Catholics who are wronged. Protestants have no rights as Protestants or Christians. The public schools, so far as the law goes, are conducted on secular or agnostic principles; and the Roman Catholics enjoy special privileges in their Separate Schools. It is impossible to abolish Separate Schools now; I am far from thinking that such a measure would be beneficial. The other alternative is to separate Romanism and Protestantism for educational purposes, from the primary school to the university, and let each religion have full sway. This might afford relief from the present intolerable state of things. We cannot rest while we are denied privileges which

are conceded to Roman Catholics. We must have equality, if not by having all public schools unsectarian and our system undenominational, then by having Protestant schools and Secularist schools as there are Roman Catholic schools, in which the religious and non-religious among Protestants may be trained as their parents desire. But care must be taken that each party support their own schools. I may address you again. Meanwhile I have the honour to be

Yours, etc.,

Dundas, July 30. 1883.

JOHN LAING.

NO. 11.

To the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario :—

HONORABLE SIR,—In a former letter I tried to show that so far from being in an inferior position as to “rights and privileges,” the Roman Catholic community of Ontario enjoy in their Separate School system privileges which are denied to Protestants. The former have full liberty to teach the religious tenets and practices of Romanism, and to use their religious books, while we Protestants may not teach in the Public Schools anything which is “anti-Papal” or offensive to Roman Catholics, and cannot use the Bible, except with the consent of trustees, and even then are prevented from teaching our religious doctrines or practices. Before leaving this subject I wish to remove still further, if possible, the false impression which is produced by the language of Archbishop Lynch when he says, “the Catholics of Quebec, *yielding to the scruples of their Protestant fellow-citizens*, permitted them to have Separate Schools,” etc. Now, sir, so far from Roman Catholics yielding anything to Protestant scruples, the establishment of Roman Catholic schools in Lower Canada is an illustration of Protestants’ toleration, and their earnest desire to respect the religious convictions of those who differ from them in creed. What are the facts? During the sixteenth century, and after it even, the motto “*cujus regio, ejus religio*” was remorselessly carried out, as it is to-day on the Continent to some extent. No toleration was granted by Romanist or Protestant State to dissenters. Tearful and bloody has been the battle for equal rights, and still it has to be maintained in Europe and Mexico, and in nearly all Roman Catholic countries. Protestant places of worship and schools, and the circulation of Protestant books, are discouraged in every possible way, and put down wherever the Roman Catholic Church has the power to do so. When, however, “New France” was conquered by Great Britain this was not done. The religion of the conquered was respected. “The treaty which ceded Canada to Great Britain secured for the Catholics of this country the free exercise and all prerogatives of their faith.”—(Memorial of lay teachers to the bishops of Quebec, dated Feb. 26, 1881.) One of these “prerogatives” is that the Church shall control the education of the young—through its Hierarchy. In good faith, therefore, the conquering nation has put the education of their youth largely into the hands of the Roman Catholic bishops, and in its legislation has helped the Church of Rome equally with the other Churches to which the conquerors belong. Surely this is a very different thing from “the Roman Catholics yielding to Protestant scruples and permitting them to have Separate Schools.” Yes, sir, it is the Protestants who have been generous both

in Ontario and Quebec. We do not expect the Church of Rome to *yield* to us one iota in religious questions; we must "wring from" her our rights. Her claim that the Church shall educate the young to the exclusion of the State is too clearly declared in the Syllabus, and has been too plainly confirmed by the evasive answer given by the Archbishop of Quebec to the memorial, from which I have quoted above, to allow anyone to be deceived who will take pains to enquire. Protestants desire even-handed justice—that, and no more; and they are willing to grant equal rights in every respect to our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, the Archbishop's unfair implications notwithstanding. But we are not willing to sit quietly with folded hands while our educational authorities grant to Roman Catholics and their clergy what they deny to Protestants and their clergy.

Honorable sir, you have not forgotten how promptly you took action when the Archbishop demanded that "Marmion" should be prescribed as immoral and anti-Papal, but it is now nine months since a deputation from the Methodist, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian Churches, consisting of both ministers and prominent laymen, waited upon the Premier and earnestly laid before him the wishes of the vast majority of the Protestants of the Province. We were indeed most courteously received, and the Premier "spoke us fair," and promised that the matter should receive his personal attention and such consideration from the Government as its importance justified. But, sir, we expected more than fair words. I am aware that a special circular was shortly afterwards issued with the view of putting the Government in possession of the facts as to the extent to which the Bible is used and the Ten Commandments taught in our Public Schools. I have no doubt that information, when we get it, will be important and useful. But, sir, as I had to do with filling up the answers in the circular, I do not think I am presumptuous when I say that, like all statistics got up for a purpose, the answers when tabled will be found unreliable and unsatisfactory, that is to men who are practically acquainted with the school-room, however much they may serve to blind the public by a show of diligence and the presenting of an array of tabled figures as to the use of the Bible. The main question as to making instruction in morals and religion a part of our children's education is not touched, even if it can be shown that a large majority of schools have the form of prayer and a few verses of Scripture read devotionally, and a hymn sung. We desiderate more than this, viz.:—*instruction*, and that that instruction shall have as prominent a place assigned to it as arithmetic or grammar, or history or literature. The motto of the educational system of Lower Canada forms a striking contrast to that of the boasted system of Ontario. The former is, "Teach the children their moral duties. NO SCHOOL WITHOUT GOD. Religion is the best teacher of our duties; it exalts man and fortifies him." The latter says (and oh, how unworthy!) the schools are established for giving a secular education. They may go on without the mention of God's name. But if the trustees of any section have strong prejudices in favor of Christianity, prayer may be offered, and if no objection is made by the ratepayers, then God's Word may be read, and the moral law may be taught, and ministers may meet such children as they can coax to remain in school after hours and give them instruction in the highest of all knowledge—morality and religion. What mockery! Now, sir, the Province was last autumn in a state of great excitement in view of the elections which were close at hand. The advocates of religious instruction were very anxious to keep education out of the political arena, if possible, and were

therefore willing to wait until the elections were over. Other very important matters have doubtless engaged the attention of the Government, and your own serious illness ought to be considered. Still I venture to say that patience has bounds. Our courteous request has not received the prompt attention accorded to the Archbishop's demand; and now we are ready for a movement in favour of a change in our regulations, no matter how our advocacy of this question may effect political parties. We must have our just demands considered and granted, even if the Government be thereby embarrassed.

Now, honorable sir, I will proceed to justify before a discerning public the demand we make in the name of the Protestant Christians of Ontario, that our children shall be taught in our schools the morality of the Bible, the doctrines on which that morality rests, and the inspired history in which it has been illustrated. I merely notice in passing that modern civilization with its school for every child is begotten of Christianity. Common schools and general education are peculiar to Protestant communities, although where Protestant schools exist, Roman Catholics in self defence have to educate their youth. In all the schools of this Western world the Bible originally had a place as a school book, and religion was taught. Only gradually and stealthily has it been insidiously excluded in many places, by the secularist and agnostic spirit of the age. Christianity is part of the recognized law of the Province, "an integral part of the common law of the land" (Judge Harrison), and our children should therefore be taught its principles and precepts. Experience has shown that the religion of Jesus Christ influences all nations for good, by elevating morality and restraining vice, and hence the youth of the country should be made acquainted with its precepts, so that they may grow up under its benign influence. The duties of this life are best performed by those who are carefully instructed in Scripture truth, and grow up in the fear of God and hope of heaven. The Bible has no equal as a book for educating intellect, heart, and taste alike. These and other considerations of a general character might be enlarged upon, but I leave them now, and will in my next letter try to show that in this Ontario of ours the consistent carrying out of the law calls for a change in the present regulations, and that in giving our children instruction in Christian morals we are doing no wrong to those of a different creed or of no creed, while we are only seeking to discharge the sacred trust committed to us as parents, to fit our children for usefulness in time, and to prepare them for a happy eternity.

Yours, etc.,

Dundas, Ont., Aug. 1, 1883.

JOHN LAING.

NO. III.

To the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario:—

HONORABLE SIR,—I propose now to show that the demand made by the representatives of the several Protestant Churches in the name of the great majority of the people of Ontario ought to be granted, and that religious instruction should form part of the course of instruction in our public institutions of learning. I shall not dwell on those grand principles and more general considerations whose force is admitted by all, even by the advocates of a purely secularist system, while they assert that it alone can be successfully or justly put in practice. I shall look at our school law as it is, and

show that not only in consistency with it may religious instruction be given, but that the spirit of the law requires that to be done.

Before our present school system was introduced in 1850 religious instruction was given in all the schools of the Province, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. The schools then existing were put by their supporters under the new system on the understanding that the Bible and even the catechisms might *still* be taught. The fact is that for many years religious instruction was continued in the schools with general satisfaction. The Irish readers, which formed the series used under the new system, contained lessons in Scripture history and Christian morals. These books had in Ireland obtained the approval of the authorities, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, as imparting to some extent the religious and moral instruction which was desiderated, and were at once received here with satisfaction and thankfulness. Clause 10 of the School Act was considered as guaranteeing the continuance of the privilege which, up to that time, had been enjoyed, viz:—"Pupils shall be allowed to receive such religious instruction as their parents and guardians desire, according to any general regulations provided for the organization, government, and discipline of Public Schools." No one dreamed that the general regulations would be such as practically to make "religious instruction" a nullity, leaving at the utmost that could be hoped for the use of a form of prayer, the reading of a few verses by the teachers or by the scholars devotionally, and the partial learning of the commandments in some of the schools. Yet such has come to be the case, and now we are coolly told that our Public Schools were established to give only secular instruction, not to teach Christianity or any other religion, but that clergymen are permitted *ex gratia* to give religious instruction out of school hours, and that they are to blame if they cannot capture the children for the purpose of having an additional lesson inflicted on them when ready to go home!

The Roman Catholic Church was the first to complain of this want of religious instruction. Its clergy saw the irreligious tendency, and denounced the schools as Godless. The superseding of the Irish series of books by those now in use, and the enforced enlargement of the programme of compulsory studies, at length made the Bible no longer a class-book, and all semblance of religious instruction disappeared from most of the Public Schools; and all this be it noted in the face of a regulation which hypocritically declares, "As Christianity is recognized by common consent throughout this Province as an essential element of education, it ought to pervade all the regulations for elementary instruction." Honorable sir, this to me is not only inconsistency in the highest degree, but bitter mockery. And, sir, I challenge any friend of purely secular education to show when by common consent throughout this Province "it was resolved" that the Great God and His revealed will were to be regulated out of our schools in the face of an Act of Parliament which provides for religious instruction. I think, sir, that every reader will now admit that our demand for religious instruction is in strict harmony with the school law, nay, that without it law is made void. Again, honorable sir, we have been told that the trustees of any school section may require religious instruction to be given. If the law allows this, surely it cannot be contrary to the law if all the school sections of a township, or of a county, or of the Province are required by competent authority to give such instruction. A board of trustees is civil authority as really as the department of the Government with which you are charged, and it can no more be a violation of the law for the Government through you to make such a regulation as we desiderate and apply it, subject to the conscience clause (9th) of the Act, than for

three men called trustees to enforce a similar regulation in one school section. Be consistent. Do not tell us that the law does not allow the enforcement of religious instruction in all school sections, but allows it in every section separately. Do not mock our common sense by telling us that three comparatively uneducated men may impose upon a remote country section what our most enlightened legislators, charged with conducting the education of our youth throughout the Province, cannot require without violating the law under which those trustees act. The inconsistency here is indeed glaring.

But, honorable sir, I will go much further. I will proceed to show that the Government is now giving religious instruction through teachers whom it directly appoints, and is paying these teachers from public funds while giving religious instruction as part of their functions.

In the fifteenth annual report of the Inspector of Prisons, I find on pages 96 and *seq.* most interesting information regarding the boys in the Reformatory at Penetanguishene. I find there that there is a Protestant chaplain and a Roman Catholic chaplain in the employ of the Government; also a Protestant schoolmaster and Roman Catholic teachers paid by the Government. The Protestant chaplain says:—"It is lamentable to observe the ignorance of the simplest principles of religion of many of the youths of this Province who become inmates of this institution. Boys who say they have attended Sunday School for months, lads who can read in the second and third books, are unable to give an answer to the question, 'How many commandments are there?' or to repeat the Lord's prayer, and appear to have never known of a Creator, Redeemer, or Sanctifier. *To be taught to pray regularly to a Divine Being, to be brought, as such boys are here, into frequent contact with religious subjects, must be attended with good results.*" Then we are told of regular religious services held and instruction given by both Protestant and Roman Catholic functionaries, of twenty-six Protestant and twenty-one Roman Catholic boys being confirmed by the Bishops, of catechisms taught and Sunday School instruction all under the authority of the Government, and, in some cases, by State-paid officials.

Now, sir, I may remark in passing that I cannot adduce any better evidence of the inadequate religious instruction received by a large portion of the youth in Ontario, both in day school and Sabbath School, than the above quotation affords. But my object is to show that a Government who, by its officials and under its authority, thus teaches religion in gaols, prisons, reformatories, refuges, and asylums, is inconsistent when it pretends that it cannot give public funds for teaching religion and Christianity in our Public Schools. Far am I from blaming the Government for thus bringing religion to bear on the criminal and fallen; nay, I heartily approve of it and rejoice in it. But, sir, you must admit that if the State may, and ought to, give religious instruction in order to reform fallen men, women, and children, it is much more proper and incumbent on them to give it in early life before they fall; nay, in order to prevent their fall and to save them from that spiritual ignorance that leads to crime. If it is proper to teach the fear of God and Christian duty, in order to correct criminals, it is a much more proper and emphatically a wiser thing to teach those lessons of heavenly wisdom to prevent their becoming criminals. If the Government knows from experience that God's Word and Christian appliances are the most powerful agents we have for reclaiming the vicious,

I use them for this purpose, much more should they insist upon their use in our public institutions of learning for the prevention of vice and for the formation of a character possessed of that high religious and moral tone that will be proof against the temptations

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to which both children and adults are sure to be exposed, and for training our youth in the practice of virtue.

How, honorable sir, can you consistently refuse; nay, can you hesitate and delay to grant our request to do what by your action in the case of criminals you declare to be proper and wise in the best interests both of the individuals and society at large? You may have reasons—political reasons—a fear of losing the support of such citizens as are not Protestants, or as are not Christians, but Atheists and Secularists. But, sir, Evangelical Christians cannot approve of such reasons. Surely the highest interests of our children and of society are paramount. Let political parties rise or fall, who cares; but the Government that will not use what it admits to be the best means for raising up intelligent, virtuous, and law-abiding citizens has lost all regard for honesty and consistency. To deprive our children of religious instruction by impracticable regulations is to rob them of their heritage, and to dwarf their moral and spiritual nature.

I have more to say of inconsistency on the part of your Government greater than the above, meanwhile, I remain,

Dundas, August 7. 1883.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN LAING.

IV.

To the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario:

HONORABLE SIR,—Permit me to show still further how inconsistently the Government, of which you are a member, is acting while you refuse or at least delay to concede to Protestant parents the coveted privilege of religious instruction for their children. I have already shown that the school law explicitly, both in its provisions and regulations, in its spirit and its administration up till 1860, secures for us the privilege you are withholding; also that it is absurd to plead inability to do what you declare any Board of Trustees can do, and further that the Government is now employing and paying public money to men who give religious instruction and conduct religious services in our public institutions, so that it is nonsense to say this cannot be done in our schools. There must be other reasons than those assigned for your delay in this matter. I shall now review somewhat particularly the doings of the Government in its support of Roman Catholic Separate Schools, showing that public money is now, in accordance with the school law, regularly paid to Roman Catholic Trustees; and that these schools in which religious instruction is given do receive public money, and if this is the case, it must be a glaring inconsistency to refuse the use of the Bible to us Protestants on the ground that public money should not be paid to schools in which sectarian instruction is given—meaning thereby Scriptural instruction. The Government should not teach Romanism if it cannot teach Protestantism and Scriptural religion.

Before entering on the subject, let me publicly thank the honourable gentleman who is now acting in your place for his kindness in giving me information on the subject. Being unwilling to write concerning any matter on which I am not at least fairly informed, I endeavoured to ascertain:—(1) What books are authorized in the Roman Catholic

Separate Schools; (2) What special regulations the schools are subject to; (3) What special privileges they have as to the persons who may be employed as teachers. I was surprised to find it difficult, well nigh impossible, for me to get, regarding these public institutions, which are supported by public funds, such information as I desiderated. I have, however, succeeded, after no little trouble, in obtaining a set of readers and the catechism which are used in the Roman Catholic Separate Schools. Extracts from these books I will give by-and-by, and thus will show what is taught to the Roman Catholic children under the sanction of the Department of Education, of which you are the responsible head; and note it, taught by men and women who are paid from public funds. But, sir, I was much astonished when informed by your Secretary that "There is no list of books specially authorized for Separate Schools, but the subject is under consideration." An explanation so far of this surprising statement I find on page 132 of your report for 1882. There the Separate School Inspector says:—"Public schools are strictly prohibited from using any but books duly authorized, while in Separate Schools there is in reality no limitation, but they have whatever books they may choose." He then suggests that "for such subjects as Algebra or geography the series used in the Public Schools might, with advantage, be adopted. For history and reading a different series would be required." Still, sir, I am perplexed. The Separate School regulations published in 1863 (page 48) make it the duty of Trustees to see that pupils are "supplied with *authorized text-books*." Also the late eminent educationist, Father Stafford, so deservedly esteemed for his zeal in the cause, when doing yeoman service in your defence in the "Marmion" controversy, wrote on October 11, 1882: "We cannot teach our religion during school hours, nor can we use any text books in our schools unless they are authorized by the Educational Department." And now I am told in August, 1883: "There is no list of books specially authorized." There must be looseness, to say the least, somewhere; but never mind, we can let this pass. Certain books, very different from those authorized for the Public Schools, are used with the sanction of the Department; and I am sure are used for teaching religion between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Father Stafford's "cannot" to the contrary. I may, therefore, leave this point with the simple remark that it is a marvellous thing in my eyes how that after twenty years during which religious instruction, in the way which the Roman Catholic Hierarchy approves, has been given, the Government has not seen fit to take cognizance of the books used in these schools, but has left the priesthood to do as they please, and now they coolly tell us "the subject is under consideration." Sir, has that pet phrase a meaning deeper than seems? Does it mean the Government intends to let things remain as they are? I am tempted to think that our request for religious instruction may, like the Roman Catholic school books, remain as it is for twenty years and more, for it is "under consideration."

To proceed, I learn from your secretary that since 1863, although "much advance," as His Grace Dr. Lynch says, has been made, there has been no change or addition in the regulations for Separate Schools. And so unimportant for conducting the schools do these regulations seem to be that they are "at present out of print." Thus, while during these twenty years the regulations for Public Schools and the text-books authorized have been subjected to increasing and vexatious changes, even *ad nauseam*, and until very few know what is according to law to-day, or whether there was not a change made yesterday, the Roman Catholic Separate Schools have had all their own way with-

out the paternal meddling of the State. Am I, sir, justified in assuming as the reason of this that you and the rest of the Government have such implicit confidence in the wise and able administration of the Archbishop and his clergy, who really control the education in the schools, that you think the proper and right thing is to abdicate your function and allow the clergy to educate the youth as they deem best? This is the claim put forth by them as their God-given right, and you practically concede the claim. But, honorable sir, where is consistency, where is justice gone, when you give the Roman clergy this ample liberty and power, and at the same time refuse to allow Protestants to give religious instruction in the schools which their children attend unless every Protestant element is eliminated, even God's word, if the Roman Catholics, through their clergy, object, and every Christian element, if agnostics can succeed in influencing the trustees of the schools. Oh, for some equal liberty for Protestants! Oh for twenty years' exemption from vexatious Governmental regulation!

Now, honorable sir, I will refer to the books which are used in the Separate Schools, and we shall see whether, when the Department allows such books to be used in schools supported by taxation and public funds, you can consistently refuse to make instruction in the Word of God a part of the compulsory programme in our Public and High Schools on the ground that it is a religious book, or a sectarian book, or "anti-Papal," or offensive to Roman Catholics and agnostics. The books which I have are (1) the First, Second, Third and Fourth Readers of the Metropolitan graded series—by a member of the Order of the Holy Cross, *permissu superiorum*. These books are published in Montreal by James A. Sadlier, Catholic publisher, 1882, and bear this endorsement: "Adopted on the report of the Catholic members of the Committee for use in the Catholic Schools of the Dominion." This seems to include Ontario, and implies that the books are intended for use in this Province. (2) The First and Second Books of Reading Lessons, by the Christian Brothers, with the approbation of the Superior. These also are adopted for use in the Dominion, as appears in the title page of the Second Book. The Second Book was published in Toronto by W. Warwick, Wellington street East, 1877; the First Book by W. Warwick & Son, date not given, but more recent. Further, I have the Most Reverend Doctor James Butler's Catechism, recommended by the four Roman Catholic Archbishops of Ireland as a general Catechism, and adopted and published by order of the first Council of Quebec, and, with additions, authorized as the English Catechism for the Arch-diocese of Toronto, to which are added an abridgement of the Christian doctrine, the Scriptural Catechism by the Right Rev. Dr. Milner, etc. This is authorized by John Joseph Lynch, Archbishop of Toronto, as the only authorized Catechism, and is published in Montreal by James A. Sadlier, 275 Notre Dame street, and entered in the office of the Minister of Agriculture in 1871 and again in 1882. Thus it appears that the Roman Catholic Separate School books are printed in the Province of Quebec, adopted by the Roman Catholic Committee of the Council of Public Instruction of that Province, which we have seen virtually consists of the Bishop, and intended for the use of the Roman Catholics of Ontario. Is your Government a consenting party to this arrangement? And while the school book business, with its alleged rings, is agitating the Protestant community to its injury, are the Roman Catholic school-books secretly furnished in the schools without the intervention of the trade? It seems, honorable sir, as if there is something here that requires explanation.

Now, sir, we shall look at the contents of these books which are taught in the Separate Schools of Ontario, presumably with your knowledge and the sanction of the Department. And first, for the Catechism, we have a table of the festivals, fast days, days of abstinence from flesh, etc. Then are given instructions for baptizing a child in danger of death by lay persons, the Christian's daily exercise of morning and night prayer, prayer to our guardian angel, the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Credo, Confiteor, the Angelus, grace before meat, grace after meat, acts of contrition, faith, hope, and charity, prayer before mass, short prayers for confession and communion, and prayers before and after catechism. Here we have a very full presentation of the *practice* of the Roman Catholic religion. Then follows Dr. Butler's Short Catechism in twelve lessons, Dr. Butler's Catechism in thirty lessons, with a supplement, next the Catholic Scriptural Catechism; after that extracts from Dr. Challoner's Christian Instructor, concerning exorcisms, benedictions, Agnus Dei, and the use of holy water, the Christian virtues, the eight beatitudes, the fifteen mysteries of the rosary, the ten commandments, scriptural references; and lastly, the manner of serving and answering at mass—on the whole a complete exposition of the Roman Catholic doctrines and ritual.

Having thus stated the contents of this authorized book, I shall stop to-day, and in my next will give some extracts which will speak for themselves, after which I will give you a few specimens of the reading contained in the reading books. But, sir, I wish you to understand that I am not now finding fault with the teaching of Romanism. The law has given the Roman Catholics the privilege of teaching their religion. I only wish to show the unfairness of denying Protestants a like privilege.

Yours, etc.,

Dundas, August 8, 1883.

JOHN LAING.

v.

To the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario.

HONORABLE SIR,—Let me premise that in giving the following extracts I have no purpose of criticising them; I only wish to show that presumably with the knowledge of the Department the text-books used in the Separate Schools, and in a sense authorized, are sectarian—unmistakably Roman Catholic—and anti-Protestant. The legal right to teach the doctrines and practices of Romanism in the Roman Catholic schools I do not dispute, but I wish to show the inconsistency of authorizing this by-law and at the same time refusing to authorize the teaching of Protestantism. In the Catechism to which I have referred there is beyond doubt much excellent matter. It is a privilege which our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens should highly esteem, that the knowledge and fear of God and duty are taught to their children; gladly might Protestants welcome much of the instruction given. There are also things taught in these schools which Protestants cannot approve of. For example, “on page 43 we read:—Q.—Is there any other true Church besides the Holy Catholic Church? A.—No; as there is but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all; there is but one true Church. Q.—Are all obliged to be of the true Church? A.—Yes; none can be saved out of it,

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etc. On page 43. Q.—Why do you call the Church Roman? A.—Because the visible head of the Church is Bishop of Rome; and because St. Peter and his successors fixed their See in Rome. Q.—Who is the visible head of the Church? A.—The Pope, who is Christ's vicar on earth, and supreme visible head of the Church. On page 46. Q.—Can the Church err in what it teaches? A.—No; because Christ promised to the pastors of His Church;—"Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." On page 82 it is said, "The Pope is an infallible teacher in all doctrines concerning faith and morals, which he defines as pastor and teacher of all Christians." On page 49 the doctrine of Purgatory is taught, and on page 72 the doctrines of the mass and transubstantiation. On page 65 it is said of those who neglect to receive eucharist at Easter, "They are to be excluded from the house of God whilst living, and deprived of Christian burial when they die." On page 80 it is said of the tie of marriage: "It never can be broken but by the death of the husband or wife." "On page 87 we find:—Q.—Is it lawful for the laity to read the Holy Scriptures? A.—They may read them in the language in which they were written, as likewise in the ancient Vulgate translation, which the Church avouches to be authentic. They may also read them in approved modern versions, but with due submission to the interpretation and authority of the Church." It is then added that from the reading of the Bible in vulgar languages, by the *unlearned and unstable*, have ensued "numberless heresies and impieties, as also many rebellions and civil wars." On page 89 it is taught that miracles have been done by holy water, "more particularly upon those occasions when it has been used against magical enchantments and the power of the devil." But I may stop here, for no one after reading these extracts can doubt that in the Roman Catholic Separate Schools anti-Protestant doctrines are taught and many things offensive to Protestants; while, as you know, sir, Archbishop Lynch, Bishop O'Leary and Father Stafford last year stoutly contended that nothing "anti-Papal" or offensive to Roman Catholics should be taught in our Public Schools, and others object to the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue, particularly on this ground. Is our system administered fairly and impartially? Are not Protestants denied "the right" claimed by Roman Catholics and granted to them?

Again, sir, the very efficient and intelligent inspector of Roman Catholic Separate schools, in his able report for 1882, as may be seen in the quotations given in my last letter, says that the text-books to be used in the Separate Schools for history and reading must be different from those used in the Public Schools. I have not the history used in the Roman Catholic schools, and I know that Collier's history was revised so as to make it less objectionable to Roman Catholics. But since then Father Stafford said it was not satisfactory. Well, sir, I have no doubt that when the matter has passed from "under consideration" by the Department, we shall have a history which will give the events of the last three centuries from a point of view very different from that which Protestants take, and the Roman Catholic children will be taught anti-Protestant history. But I need not trouble you with any further conjectures on the subject. We may wait till such a work is authorised and in use. I am, however, in a position to give a few extracts from the readers now in use, which will speak for themselves, and will show that even if the catechism were not taught, Romanism is taught in the reading lessons.

In the First Book by the Christian Brothers, amidst most excellent matter, we have on page 40 a story about Queen Blanche and her son, Saint Louis, in which we are told

that the latter never committed a mortal sin, and was so holy and good that he was made a saint. The last lesson is a hymn to St. Joseph, "spouse of our Lady," which is in reality a prayer. The Second Book is an admirable compilation of wholesome and useful instruction on the whole, but we have mention on page 62 of St. John of God, on page 96 of St. Vincent of Paul, on page 118 of St. Felicitas and her sons, on page 63 there is a hymn to the Virgin Mary, and on page 103 "The Hail Mary," with a story, and the lesson ends with these words:—"She will obtain for you, also, the greatest of all graces, a happy death." The lessons also on England, Scotland, and Ireland refer to the religion of the nation in a way which particularly favours Romanism.

Of the Metropolitan series in the First Reader on pages 51 and 81 there are illustrations of a little girl kneeling before an image of the Virgin in prayer; on page 63 a picture of the eye of God; on page 27 there is an interesting story of little Alice, with altar and crucifix by her dying bed; of the vision of her guardian angel and "Our Holy Mother with the Divine Child in her arms," and of the priest coming, when "little Alice received our blessed Lord into her heart, and was anointed." On page 114 an illustration of Saint Joseph with child in arms, and a hymn or prayer to him. Thus at the earliest age in childhood are Romanist ideas impressed upon the child's imagination. The Second Book is on the whole admirable; it contains, however, many notices of the saints and their deeds; references to the Virgin, and a telling dissertation on confession, which are emphatically Romanist; also the following anti-Protestant historical statement on page 202. The story of Katharine "is a very long and a very sad one, and you will read it in the history of England. You will read, too, how her wicked husband rebelled against the Pope, because he would not consent to his cruel treatment of his queen, and how *he made himself a Pope*, and began what is called the Reformation." The Third Book, still keeping up the Roman Catholic tone of teaching, has nothing in advance of the other two. But when we come to the Fourth Book, the religious character of the instruction is strongly developed, as well as its anti-Protestant aspect. The first lesson on page 15 is an exposition of Romish baptism. Baptism, it is said, "makes us children of God, and of His holy Church, and unless we receive it, we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." The significance of all the baptismal rights is also set forth. On page 75 the significance of the cross is explained; on page 109. confirmation and the chrism; on page 131 is a thrilling death scene inculcating the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and its efficacy as the *viaticum*; on page 201 is an exposition of the Eucharist as held by the Roman Catholic Church, and a vindication of it, ending with these words, "A bad communion renders them the associates of devils, and marks them as candidates for evil, while a good communion elevates them to the companionship of angels, and seals them as the children of God." On page 204 the children are taught as an historical fact that "the house of Nazareth in which the blessed Virgin was born, in which our Lord passed his holy childhood and the years of his manhood until the age of thirty * * * was converted into a chapel where mass was celebrated every day during the first centuries of the Church. Towards the close of the ninth century, this house was *by a miracle* carried through the air into Dalmatia. In the same miraculous manner it was finally translated to Loretto, where it now stands under the dome of a splendid cathedral which has been erected around it." Next lesson treats of extreme unction. On page 257 is an illustration of Mary in regal glory as the queen of heaven, and a hymn in her praise. Now, sir, I am ready to acknowledge the

excellence in many respects of these books. I am much pleased with the prominence given in them to scripture themes. I do not, however much I may disprove of the Romanist teaching, for a moment find fault with the men who have made the whole tone of the reading decidedly Romanist, and consequently anti-Protestant and offensive to Protestants. In preparing and using these books in the schools, the Roman Catholic clergy are only exercising an undoubted right secured to them by the school law. But, honourable sir, I challenge the justice of the Administration of a Government which accords to one-fifth of the people these privileges and denies like privileges to the other four-fifths. I charge partiality and grievous wrong-doing against you when you say that not only shall Roman Catholics have their religion taught in their own schools, but shall, also, through the Archbishop have the right to demand that the Protestant Bible shall not be read in the schools where Protestants are educated, and that Protestant history must not be taught in them, because it offends Roman Catholics. It is, sir, giving Romanism an undue advantage over Protestantism. By your present attitude and regulations, you are favoring and helping on the spread of Romanism in our province, and putting the children of the Separate Schools under the most powerful influence for the formation of a decidedly Roman Catholic character, and at the same time you are weakening Protestantism by withholding its proper nutriment from the Word of God, and are producing a generation of so-called Protestants utterly ignorant of Protestant truth, and unable to state or defend their faith. Thus you are preparing the way for their passing over insensibly into and without a struggle falling the victims of either superstition or religious indifference, agnosticism, and atheism. Yours, sir, is a great responsibility, and if this province shall be found retrograding in intelligence, becoming more criminal, with a lower moral tone, sinking in the slough of materialism, expediency, and communism, the reason will certainly be found in this, that you are withholding from our Protestant youth the only safeguard of morality, liberty, and manhood. Why you persist in doing this I shall enquire in another letter.

Yours, &c.,

Dundas, Aug. 10, 1883.

JOHN LAING.

VI.

To the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario.

HONORABLE SIR,—In letters I have already addressed to you I have endeavored to justify the request which was made last year by representatives of the three largest Protestant denominations, that religious instruction from the Word of God shall form part of the ordinary work of the Public Schools, always of course subject to clause 9th of the Act, known as the "Conscience Clause." In doing this I have argued: That the law contemplates the giving of religious instruction, such as the parents desire, while existing regulations render nugatory the provision of clause 10th; that the Department of Education may do what any board of trustees can do, viz.—authoritatively introduce the Bible into the schools over which they have control; that the Government is even now through paid officials giving religious instructions in other institutions, so that the objection to doing this in our schools *on principle* cannot be sincere; and that in the Roman Catholic Separate Schools religious instruction is given by the Government, which is both anti-Protestant and offensive to Protestants, so that to refuse to our Protestant children

the use of the Bible on the ground that anti-Papal teachings, or teachings offensive to Roman Catholics, cannot be allowed in schools supported by taxation and from public funds, is unjust, as it is injurious, to the interests of the Protestant community. I now proceed to consider what reasons there may be for the refusal or the delay of the Government to grant our earnest request. As you have not seen fit to give us the reasons, I must gather from other sources such information as I can; and if in doing this I should be unjust to the Government, I will acknowledge my error as publicly as I now state what seems to me to be the reason, whenever the Government gives me the opportunity by deigning to favor the deputation who waited on the Premier last autumn with an answer.

You doubtless are aware, honorable sir, that about the close of the year 1881 a discussion on the subject of religious instruction took place in the columns of the *Globe* newspaper. What measure of inspiration from the Education Department the editorial articles then published had I am not in a position to state; but one could not read them from time to time without feeling that the writer had good *authority* behind him, just as in the late "Marmion" controversy, when that journal defended you and the Arch bishop. Now, in that discussion the ostensible reasons given for not allowing religious instruction to form part of the ordinary work of the Public School were:—

1. A fear that if this were done "the whole community would soon be split up, educationally, into as many parts as we have religious denominations."

2. That "the object of the school law of this province is to give children a sound education, physically, intellectually, and morally, *but it is no part of that object to secure for them religious instruction*" (and this in the face of clause 9th of the Act!)

3. That there would be a danger of teachers being employed who would abuse their position by teaching heterodoxy or proselytizing.

4. That as a matter *both of principle and expediency* the State should not undertake the work of religious instruction in any form. The work of imparting religious instruction devolves on the parent and on the Church.

5. That there are many who claim to be religious without being Christian, and that these should be deferred to by not giving children generally instruction in Christianity.

6. That there are hundreds of districts in Ontario in which any mandatory regulation requiring the use of the Bible would be resisted.

7. That the great majority of the supporters of Public Schools in this province are averse to a change in the direction of making instruction in Christian morals compulsory, and that no desire for such a change had ever found expression on the floor of the Legislature.

At a later date the same journal tried to pooh-pooh the movement in the Synods of Hamilton and London, and to extinguish it with one agnostic blast. That movement has gone on notwithstanding. Then there were added as reasons:—

8. That making the use of the Bible as a class-book compulsory "is an infringement upon the rights of minorities." Because, forsooth, "various classes of persons, such as Roman Catholics, agnostics, etc., *would feel their consciences were violated*"!!

9. That some "most devout believers" in the Bible object to having Bible teachings associated with "task-work and drudgery and often with tears and stripes." Out on the hypocritical veiling of the cloven foot, with the semblance of respect for the Book!

10. That many teachers may be employed who "are deplorably agnostic" and "regard a large portion of Bible history as a myth, its miracles as feats of *legerdemain*, and its doctrines as on a par with the ancient mythologies," and that Christians had better not leave their children to form some of their earliest and deepest impressions of the Bible under such instructors." Again, we say, away with the slimy mockery in the form of pious regard!

11. That there would be a danger of "making the sacred Book by such legislation, an apple of discord amongst the sects."

Such are the reasons which have been paraded in the leading Reform journal, presumably with the knowledge of the Department of Education, as justifying a refusal of the request to have the Bible in our schools. No, sir, I beg your pardon; far be it from me to impute to you or to the department the inspiration of the last four hypocritical, snivelling, mock-pious, but really agnostic, reasons. I think I can discern in them the spirit of a writer who elsewhere gave to the public the following:—"There should be no Christian teaching or observance (except moral) in educational institutions supported by the taxes of free-thinkers and Christians alike; and we are therefore bound to work for the abrogation of all such unjust and discriminating laws." Also, I think I detect the hand of one who over his own name published the following resolution:—"That the Bible, being regarded as a book of sacred character and of religious authority only by a part of the people, is to all intents and purposes a sectarian book; and we protest against the *permission* of its use in the Public Schools on the pretence of its being a non-sectarian book, as a manifest evasion of the truth and a wilful disregard of the equal religious rights of the people;" also, "that the Public School system cannot be sustained in equal justice to all except by confining it to strictly secular instruction; that all *religious exercises should be prohibited* in the Public Schools," etc. I repeat it most emphatically—far be it from me to impute to you or the Government of Ontario such sentiments. I am inclined to think that even the *Globe* will go back upon itself, and disclaim what was then written by an editorial hand and given to the public without due care; at least I hope it will do so, and leave the paternity of the last four reasons to the proper person. It is not difficult to discern in that swoop against Christianity the descent of a bird of prey, when he thought the religion of Jesus could be assailed under the specious pretext of a zeal for God's Word, and against all such Atheism we do well to be on our guard.

To return then to the reasons assigned by the *Globe* in cool blood; several of them have been already dealt with by me. But I may remark on the first, the fear is unfounded; but if a Christian education can only be had in denominational schools, I say emphatically that were better than an agnostic education. To the third, the answer of Mr. MacMurchy, approved unanimously at the Teachers' Association, is more than sufficient:—"Any one who cannot reverently, humbly, and lovingly read the Scriptures is not fit for a teacher." As to the fourth, I have shown that you have given up the "principle" by giving religious instruction in other public institutions; and as for the "expediency," unless you mean the avoidance of trouble through religious strife, I can only say the most inexpedient thing you can do is to withhold so far as you can from the rising youth the knowledge of Gospel truth and instruction in the fear of God and moral duty. Most parents you know cannot give that instruction if they would; the churches during one day in seven cannot accomplish much in Sabbath school; and you

refuse to Protestant Churches what you say it is right for the Roman Catholic Church to enjoy.

As to the fifth and sixth reasons, the Premier told us that not more than one in seventy of our population could be regarded as hostile to the Bible ; and the Roman Catholics can have Separate Schools wherever they choose. Is it then just to withhold from sixty-nine a privilege enjoyed by a fifth of the population because the sixtieth man pleads that his conscience is aggrieved? And, perhaps, that man does not believe in conscience at all. The seventh reason remains to be noticed. My reply is simply this, we are about to try our strength to make ourselves heard through our representatives in the Legislature, and we shall see on which side the majority of the people is. If the present Government will then give effect to our wishes, well and good ; if not, then —. But I forbear to boast or to threaten. Only this, the stronger must prevail.

But, honorable sir, you must excuse me when I say that I am afraid none of these reasons is the true one. I am a Reformer in politics, and a Liberal, and I regret to write to you that the conviction has been forced upon me that you are delaying to grant our proper request on account of political exigencies. The Archbishop is a political power ; the extreme Radical and infidel wing of the party is active and unscrupulous, and your Government is afraid to offend either of them. You are counting on the patient endurance of Evangelical Protestants, while you are for political ends allowing them to be put under the heel of the Roman Catholic Church, and to be educated by agnostics. I have shown how the former insist upon equal rights in our Public Schools, and on keeping out everything decidedly Protestant, and I need only remind you how agnostics and believers in the philosophy of expediency are attaining under your Administration most important positions, and to some extent the control of all our public educational institutions. You know what changes have been forced upon our High Schools and University to please both Roman Catholics and agnostics, and I am afraid that the Government dare not act as Evangelical Christian's desire, lest they lose political support. I grieve while I write these lines, but I know that I only utter the opinion of some of the best of the Liberal party in Ontario. I shall be happy indeed to be undeceived, and to see the Government rise superior to the temptation. I only fear that they cannot.

And now let me close these letters by suggesting the only, as it seems to me, remedy for this lamentable bondage. The remedy is the return to a Chief Superintendent and Council of Public Instruction. The appointment of a Minister of Education, a member of the Government of the day, was, as I look at it, a great mistake. No matter what party is in office, it will use the educational system for its support, and the opposition will attack it. Our educational interests, honorable sir, are infinitely superior to questions about Rat Portage or lumberers' rights. It is a sin against the youth of our country to have these all-important concerns mixed up with political squabbles and electioneering scandals ; and, as it seems to me, the only way to save them from such complications is to abolish the Ministry of Education altogether and return to our old way. Let me, sir, ask you what we may expect if you shall not be able to resume your onerous duties, and your experienced deputy should retire? Who would fill your place? Would the Roman Catholics not demand that one of the officers, either Minister or Deputy Minister, shall be a Roman Catholic? How would it look to have the educational system of Protestant Ontario under the control of a

Roman Catholic, who in educational matters must obey the Church? Could it be that four-fifths of the community, being Protestants, should, for political reasons, be put for educational purposes under the Pope of Rome? I wish Roman Catholics to have every right that Protestants enjoy; I am willing that Roman Catholic parents should have their children educated as they please—by the Roman Catholic clergy if they choose to be subject to them in the matter. But I am not willing that a Roman Catholic Minister of Education or his deputy shall control as his Grace the Archbishop may direct, the schools in which our children are educated. And yet I can see how political exigencies, which have made you as Minister of Education carry out the Archbishop's wishes, may at any time make the appointment of a Roman Catholic Minister of Education an inevitable necessity.

There are other matters connected with our schools, such as text-books, cramming, examinations with their great expense, which require ventilation. These I leave in the hope that they will be fully brought before the public by those who are more fully acquainted with them than I am. I now close, honorable sir, my address to you on this most important matter of religious instruction with the assurance that this matter cannot sleep. We must have the privilege guaranteed us by the law and enjoyed by our Roman Catholic citizens, and we will not let any Government rest in peace that refuses our earnest request on behalf of our children and in the best interests of our province.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Dundas, Ont., Aug. 10, 1883.

JOHN LAING.

PROTESTANT "BIGOTRY" AND "MARMION."

To the Editor of The Mail.

SIR,—This "Marmion" controversy has resulted from a very innocent enquiry addressed by me to the *Globe*, as to the reason for suspending the teaching of that book in the High Schools. Had the *Globe* fairly and plainly stated in reply two weeks ago what it says to-day in its editorial, viz., in effect that Archbishop Lynch had remonstrated against its use; that he had a right to do so; that the Minister of Education was convinced that the book, being offensive to Roman Catholics, was an improper book to be read, because "the spirit of toleration demands that nothing obnoxious to the feelings of any sect or creed should be taught at the public expense,"—had this reason been plainly given at first the public would have known what was what. But we were misled at first; we were told that the book was immoral, and passages were suggestive; next that High School teachers felt difficulty in teaching the indecent passages, etc. No one believed all this; the public knew that these alleged reasons were mere bluffs. But at length Archbishop Lynch fearlessly proclaimed to his own flock in St. Michael's Cathedral, on two successive Sabbaths, the real reason. The book was withdrawn because Archbishop Lynch objected to its use in the name of the church of Rome, as he considered portions of it to be "indecent, immoral, untruthful, and insulting to Roman Catholics." At length we have the "true inwardness" of the Minister's action. You,

sir, and your numerous correspondents have so fully shown the ridiculousness of the allegations regarding "Marmion," that it would be killing a dead man to add a word on that point. But the *Globe* of to-day takes a new departure and insults Protestants. It charges some Protestants with "sectarian bigotry," because they object to the action of the Minister of Education. Is Protestantism a sect? Is the Romish the only church? Is it bigotry to be non-Popish? I would ask, has no Sectarian bigotry been manifested by Archbishop Lynch? The Roman Catholic priesthood refuse to allow their children in Ontario to be educated along with Protestants, except in localities where they are too weak to have Separate Schools. In their Separate Schools they teach their religion as they please and practise it, too; but they object to Protestants having children taught Protestantism or practising it in non-Roman Catholic Schools. They revise our histories, and will not let Protestants say a disrespectful word about the Church of Rome in our schools, but say what they please against us in their schools. Protestants have submitted to this for peace sake, and now they are charged by the *Globe* with "Sectarian bigotry" because they dare object to a Roman Catholic prelate interfering officially through the Government of the day with our High Schools. Protestant endurance surely has limits. If Roman Catholics are willing to attend the High Schools and Colleges, erected in a Protestant community, and which are Protestant in tone and feeling, we welcome them, and we will do our utmost not to offend or injure any Roman Catholic, as Christians and gentlemen should. But it is a very different thing to ask us Protestants to conduct the education of our youth in High School and College in such a way as to please the Romish Hierarchy. We cannot teach history so as to please them and be truthful. We cannot teach morality to our children, or even science or political economy, and be in harmony with the Syllabus of Pius IX. Surely, sir, it is not "bigotry" to ask that our youth be taught what we believe to be the truth, even if the Roman Catholic Hierarchy cry out and say it is "offensive" to them. Surely Protestants, and not Roman Catholics, should say what their children are to be taught. I remember well the Archbishop's published manifesto as to tolerance and intolerance. Evils, he says, must be tolerated when we have not the power to remove them; but intolerance becomes a duty when we can remove the evil. I know, too, that he regards Protestant education as an evil not to be tolerated if it can be removed. He holds that "the Church" should educate, not the State, not the parent; and an education not controlled by the Church is, in his eyes, an evil which should be removed as soon as possible. Is it then bigotry to insist on the liberty of educating our children as Protestants? If so, I am not ashamed to own it—I am a bigot. I claim the right to educate my child without consulting the Romish Hierarchy. If we cannot have our youth educated along with Roman Catholics without having to surrender Protestantism, then perish our school system. If there is no other "safety valve," then let us have separate High Schools and a separate college at once. That may be an evil; it is a less evil than to put our schools under the control of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN LAING.

Dundas, Oct. 3, 1883.

FATHER STAFFORD AND THE "MARMION" DIFFICULTY.

To the Editor of the Mail.

SIR,—I feel that an apology is due to you when a second time I ask the use of your columns and obtrude myself on the notice of the public in connection with a matter which has been so fully, thoroughly and satisfactorily dealt with by yourself and your correspondents. Nor would I do so were it not for the letter of Father Stafford of the 11th inst., which attacks me for daring to speak of Roman Catholic and Protestant schools, and so tries to divert the attention of the public from the real issue. I do not think that anyone misunderstood me, or was offended by my alleged "error" in calling Separate Schools Roman Catholic and the others Protestant. Nor do I suppose that any reader thought me so ignorant of the school law as to require the paternal counsel and advice of the reverend father to study it. I thank him all the same for the advice, but can assure him that I know quite as much about the law as my would-be mentor, and as much perhaps about the true history of our Common Schools as he does.

At the same time, Mr. Editor, I have to thank Mr. Stafford for the very courteous and professedly conciliatory tone of his letter. Were it not, sir, that my Protestant training has led me to suspect that beneath smooth words hostile intentions may lurk, I could agree with Father Stafford, and join with him in an endeavour to frame a system of education under which the Roman Catholic and Protestant youth could sit side by side and learn, not only true science, but *true history*, and Christian morality together. "Glad," indeed, would I be to find Roman Catholic and Protestant "on a footing of perfect equality." It is just because the action of the Minister of Education has disturbed this "perfect equality," and has wronged Protestants by giving, *not Roman Catholics*, but a Catholic Archbishop an unjust advantage that, as a Protestant, I complain. It is just because I have "the love of freedom in my breast," that I resist the attempt of an Archbishop "to inflict upon me what he himself would not submit to," viz., interference with our national schools.

It pleases me, and as much surprises me, to find Mr. Stafford speaking of "*other denominations*," implying in the use of the term that the Roman Catholic Church is one of the "denominations" or sects of the Christian Church. Does the reverend gentleman use the term advisedly, or was it a *lapsus*? If the latter, we may let it pass, for in that case all his reasoning is in vain. But if he holds, as a good Catholic should, that the Church of Rome is THE Church, the only Church, then all talk about equality is—he will pardon me—nonsense, calculated to mislead; or is this statement designedly made to cast dust in our eyes? The real question, Mr. Editor, which I raise is not: are the feelings of Roman Catholics to be respected? for to this every gentleman and Christian answers, yes. It is,—*ought the civil government to regard the authoritative dictum of a Romish Hierarchy, secretly communicated, as sufficient ground for action?* Or,—*has a Romish Hierarchy, AS SUCH, THE RIGHT to interfere with the administration of public affairs?* The question refers not to the rights of Roman Catholic citizens, but to the arrogant claims of the Hierarchy. I hope Father Stafford now understands the issue. Let him answer the question in the affirmative, if he dares.

Let me ask Father Stafford, does he approve this "modern error," condemned by Pope Pius IX. (No. 45 in the Syllabus), viz., "*The entire direction of public schools in which the youth of Christian States are educated, except (to a certain extent) in the case*

of Episcopal seminaries, *may and must appertain* to the civil power and belong to it, so far that *no other authority whatsoever shall be recognized as having any right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, arrangement of the studies, the taking of degrees, or the choice and approval of the teachers?*" If so, then he must admit that the authoritative interference of a Catholic Archbishop was unwarranted, and he and I are at one. If he, on the other hand, condemns this as an error, then he claims for the "ecclesiastical authorities" the right of interference which was conceded by the Minister of Education and asserted by Archbishop Lynch. It is of this that I complain. Once more. Is Father Stafford prepared to give up Separate Schools, and to consent to the use in our Public Schools *of such books only* as contain no reference to Popish worship and usages which may be offensive to Protestants? If so, I am ready to meet him on common ground. But he knows, and the public knows, that the Roman Catholic clergy formerly denounced such schools as Godless and immoral, and that it was to meet *their* views that Protestants reluctantly agreed to the establishment of Separate Schools. And I may add that rather than submit to the interference of the Hierarchy of Rome with the Public Schools, Protestants are prepared to separate themselves entirely from their Roman Catholic fellow-citizens and to give the latter Separate High Schools and colleges. If Roman Catholics cannot agree to have their children educated as Protestants wish their children to be educated, by all means let us part in peace and let each section educate their own children. In a word, so long as the Romish Church claims to be the only Church, and by Divine appointment possessed of the *right* to educate "the youth of Christian States" under her ecclesiastical authority; so long as she insists upon the submissive obedience of all good Catholics to the hierarchy; so long as she condemns the following propositions as errors not to be tolerated:—"Every man is free to embrace and profess the religion which he shall believe true, guided by the light of reason," and "Protestantism is nothing more than another form of the same true Christian religion, in which it is possible to be equally pleasing to God as in the Catholic Church." (Nos. 15 and 18 of the Syllabus)—I say, so long as those claims are put forth and maintained I must withstand the Church of Rome and her Hierarchy with their monstrous claims, as the enemy of liberty, of free thought, and of freedom of conscience; and all true Protestants will join in resisting the practical enforcement of these claims. Further let me say, that while I concede to Dr. Lynch every right claimed by myself as a citizen, and as a parent (if he has wards according to civil law), I distinctly refuse to admit that as Archbishop, or head of a religious organization, or as a *Father in God*, he has any right to interfere with the affairs of the nation. We have his own words for it (if the *Globe's* report be true) that it was as a "Catholic Bishop," who considered himself charged to see to the morality of the Roman Catholic youth, that he remonstrated; and the Minister of Education is said by the *Globe* to give, as the real reason of the suspension of the work, that it was offensive to Roman Catholics. The only evidence of this is that Archbishop Lynch asserted it. We do not believe that the book is offensive to Roman Catholics; but we know, and Father Stafford knows, that when this one fallible man *ex cathedra* has declared the book improper and offensive, every good Catholic must submit and yield his private judgment to the dictation of his ecclesiastical superior. Against this infringement of the liberty of our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens we protest; and still more we do so, when by this ecclesiastical act dissension is produced and the whole community is convulsed.

In conclusion, allow me to thank the gentleman who conducts *The Mail* for giving us opportunity for free discussion. The *Globe* refused to publish a letter from me on this subject. I am not the only Reformer who has been thus treated; nor is the *Globe*, I am sorry to say it, the only Reform journal that has tried to stifle free speech. They wish the subject to die from the public mind. And surely it is evidence of a consciousness that the cause is a bad one when the *Globe* has ceased from argument, and is trying to inflame religious animosity by charging Protestants with being sectarian bigots, and attacking *ministers* because they have over their own names sought to influence public opinion, while at the same time it approves of an *Archbishop* secretly compelling a weak Minister of Education to do his bidding, and then publicly in his pulpit discussing what properly is a civil and political question.

Yours, etc.,

The Manse, Dundas, October 13th, 1883.

JOHN LAING.

OUR NATIONAL SCHOOLS—ARE THEY PROTESTANT?

To the Editor of The Mail.

SIR,—Father Stafford seems determined to force discussions on Protestants, as his ecclesiastical superior, the Archbishop, by his secret interference with our High Schools, first provoked their resistance. Although I am unwilling to write anything which may engender more bad feeling, some plain things have to be said, and let an intelligent public judge, and say who is to blame—the aggressor or he who writes in self-defence.

In Father Stafford's letter of the 17th inst. I note several things that should be answered. Such as the reiterated charge of immorality in the poem "Marmion," the justification of the Archbishop's action, the offence taken by Father Stafford and others, his energetic denunciation of teaching history in our schools; and, mainly, his assertion that our national schools are not Protestant. This last mentioned is the only one on which I propose addressing you to-day; the others may receive attention at another time, if that be found necessary.

Here are the reverend gentlemen's own words:—"The assertion that our schools are Protestant is new, and now made for the first time. Until now we were told they were unsectarian and undenominational, and equally acceptable to all alike. Which are they? Undenominational when you want our money for their support, but Protestant when you *want to insult us—to trample on our rights, and propagate your Protestantism.*" In answer to the last clause, I will only say Protestants never wanted or asked for Roman Catholic money. They do not need it. They can educate their own children without receiving money from Roman Catholics. Where mixed Public Schools exist the Roman Catholics are the party that gain by the co-partnership. Protestants, for the sake of having the whole people educated, in order to have a national system, desiring to see their Roman Catholic fellow-citizens educated, where but for schools chiefly maintained by Protestant money they would remain untaught, are willing to have Roman Catholic children educated along with their children. But we do not stoop to ask money from Roman Catholics wherewith to educate our children. This much we have

done for the good of others, and are doing so still, and it is thus Father Stafford acknowledges our generosity! As for the "wanting to insult, etc.," I scorn to meet the contemptible insinuation. Father Stafford cannot think that such language will promote amity and good feeling.

As to the main point, Father Stafford's statement is disingenuous and unfair. It contains as much falsehood as truth. Let us look at the facts. It is beyond the possibility of dispute that the first Grammar schools and King's College were Protestant and denominational. We know when they ceased to be denominational, but not when they ceased to be Protestant. The promoters of these institutions, while desirous of giving Roman Catholic youth every privilege along with Protestants, and of accommodating them to the peculiarities of Roman Catholics as far as possible, never dreamed of renouncing the Protestant character of the schools and colleges. It is true that of late years the High Schools have been supported by taxation, part of which is borne by Roman Catholics, but the Parliament never declared that this changed their Protestant character. Religious instruction in them is subject to the same regulations as in the Public Schools, and that is unmistakably Protestant to such a degree that Roman Catholic pupils are granted permission to be absent during religious exercises or instruction.

But the reverend father is not satisfied with claiming for High Schools and College a non-Protestant character, he claims it for *all* Public schools. Over two-thirds of the Catholic students of Ontario attend the Public and High Schools, and over two-thirds of the Catholic teachers are employed in the Public and High Schools, therefore Roman Catholics have equal rights with Protestants in these schools, Public and High alike. We dispute the claim, and still more the justice of the claim. Let facts speak. From 1816 to 1841 the Common Schools were *denominational*. The vast majority were Protestants, a few were Roman Catholics. The Act of 1843 permitted both Protestant and Roman Catholic Separate Schools. In 1847, instead of having Separate Schools under a distinct management, trustees were empowered to establish either denominational or *mixed* schools. In 1850, the Act on which the present law is founded came into force. Under it twelve or more heads of families have power to erect a Protestant or Roman Catholic Separate School, with the limitation that a Protestant Separate School can only exist when the teacher is a Roman Catholic, and a Roman Catholic Separate School only when the teacher is a Protestant. In 1855 an Act was passed which allowed five Roman Catholic heads of families to enjoy this privilege. In 1863 the Roman Catholic Separate School Act was passed, in the preamble of which it is said:—"Whereas it is *just* and *proper* to restore to Roman Catholics in Upper Canada certain *rights* which they formerly enjoyed." Judging from this Act, the *rights* were the privileges formerly enjoyed when all schools were denominational. We need not particularize, enough that the demand was granted, and Roman Catholic Separate Schools were put on a footing of higher privilege than other schools, and were relieved from some provisions of the Public School Act which were "offensive" to them. Were these *Protestant* provisions, or provisions suited to *Protestant* schools, but unsuited to Roman Catholic?

In view of these facts, is it true that "the assertion is new, and now made for the first time, that our schools are Protestant?" No, sir. The truth is, College, High Schools, Public Schools in Ontario were *all originally denominational* and Protestant, except the Roman Catholic denominational schools. They used Protestant books, and

enjoyed Protestant religious services. Gradually the various denominations united in educating their children, and denominational schools were merged in mixed schools, but still they were Protestant. Roman Catholics still had their own schools. In many places, however, they were too few in number or too poor to maintain Roman Catholic schools, and Protestants welcomed their children to the schools maintained by them. In other places where Roman Catholics were in the majority and Roman Catholic teachers were employed Protestant children attended the Roman Catholic schools, and thus the schools became in many places mixed, and even now the distinction obtains. While Roman Catholics may erect a Separate School in any place where five heads of families choose, none but Roman Catholics can be supporters. Thus these schools are exclusively Roman Catholic and denominational. The other schools are non-denominational, but Protestant; that is, all the people of every denomination must support them except Roman Catholics, who are supporters of a Separate School; and no Protestant Separate School can be erected, except in a district where the teacher is a Roman Catholic, and *twelve* heads of families apply; and further, no Roman Catholic can be required to attend the religious exercises or instructions given in the school. These are some of the facts in the case.

Look now at Father Stafford's claim. It may be thus stated:—Protestants had schools at one time, but they lost them when they admitted Roman Catholic children to their schools, and sent their children to Roman Catholic schools, or employed Roman Catholic teachers, so that what were formerly Protestant schools belong now as much to Roman Catholics as to them. Roman Catholics have their own schools free from Protestant interference in all places where they are strong enough to have Separate Schools, and also have the right to interfere with *all* Public Schools maintained in whole or in part by Protestants, and whether Roman Catholic pupils attend them or not. Is this just? Is it fair? Can it be law? If it is law, it is time for Protestants to have "certain rights" formerly enjoyed by Protestants restored, and to have Protestant or denominational schools again established.

Is Father Stafford aware of this monstrous injustice? Without a doubt; nay, he glories in it, and taunts us with it. Hear him:—"The educational system is not the work of Catholics; consequently they are not to blame if Protestants are deprived of their rights to teach Protestantism in their schools." In other words, Protestants have been such fools as to give us (the Catholics) equal rights with them in their schools, and have given us schools to ourselves into the bargain, while they have no schools of their own. It was their work. They have themselves only to blame, as was said on another occasion, "*Nous avons l'avantage, profitons nous!*"

Is this generous? Is it true? How was the Act of 1863 which thus favours Roman Catholics to the disadvantage of Protestants obtained? Was it a Government measure? No; but a private bill framed and promoted by a Roman Catholic, Mr. Scott, avowedly in the interests of Roman Catholics; opposed most determinedly by the majority from Upper Canada, but carried through political intrigue by the Catholic majority from Lower Canada. Is then *this* part of "the educational system not the work of Roman Catholics?" Oh, Father Stafford! But a minority from Upper Canada favoured it. Yes, and what was the plea they put in? What led even that minority to assent to the injustice? "Separate Schools," said the chief superintendent, "have hitherto proved one of the SAFETY VALVES for diverting and paralysing opposi-

tion to our Common School system. Protestants can surely afford to be as liberal as are Roman Catholics in Lower Canada." Protestants were told that by thus generously dealing with our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens the latter would be satisfied and would no longer interfere with us. That this Act would be a finality. But, lo! nineteen years thereafter Father Stafford tells us we were *fools* to give them the advantage which they forced from us by Lower Canada Catholic votes; *fools*, because we allow two-thirds of the Roman Catholic youth to share the blessings of our schools where they are either too weak to maintain Separate Schools without our money or in the majority, and can employ a Roman Catholic teacher; *fools*, because in what were once our schools we employ two-thirds of the certificated Roman Catholic teachers. Oh, Father Stafford! And yet you expect us to live on terms of amity, while we are thus kept in an unfair position and taunted with it; while we are told that we "shall not teach" true history because it offends you, and that we must submit to the supervision of the acknowledged head of the Church that curses us.

Mr. Editor, things cannot remain as they are if our schools are not Protestant. Protestants are tolerant, but if our tolerance and readiness, even to be generous to our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, are to be used against us, and we are to be "deprived of our rights," as the reverend father says we have been, it is high time for Protestants to assert these rights.

I have referred to only one class of facts which vindicate the rights of Protestants to our non-sectarian schools against the claims of the Hierarchy of Rome to interfere with their management. With your permission I may add something at another time.

Yours, etc.,

Dundas, Ont., Oct. 20.

JOHN LAING.

ARE OUR NATIONAL SCHOOLS PROTESTANT?

To the Editor of the Mail.

SIR,—In a former communication I reviewed the history of our Public Schools, with the purpose of showing that our National Schools were originally denominational and Protestant, or Roman Catholic; that they gradually became non-denominational, but never ceased to be Protestant. On the contrary, that to the original Act of 1850 certain amendments were made giving Roman Catholics relief and advantages over Protestants in Separate Schools; and that this concession to Roman Catholics was proposed by the Rev. Dr. Ryerson, and assented to by others, in the hope that Protestants would no longer be troubled by the interference of Roman Catholics with the National Schools. So that although the law has nowhere declared our schools to be Protestant, it has never denied that they are such, nor has it changed anything in the original Protestant features of our schools and the conducting of them. If the Protestant features have for nineteen years lain in abeyance, they have never been abolished.

There are, however, other considerations to be urged. Our nation is a Christian nation, not a pagan or heathen nation. Christianity is admitted as at the foundation of our laws, as Judge Moss decided in the famous case at Napanee when the use of public

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property was refused for the purpose of propagating Atheism. Instruction in *Christian* morality is recognized as one end of our Public School education. Our schools, therefore, are Christian schools in which the Holy Scriptures may be read, and religious worship may be celebrated; but Atheism cannot be taught there. Now, Christians in Canada are either Roman Catholics or Protestants. Christian schools, therefore, must be either Protestant or Roman Catholic, and as they are not Roman Catholic they must be Protestant. Protestantism is not a sect nor a denomination of Christians, as Roman Catholicism claims that it is. I do not care for the name, but I contend that the schools belong to Christianity, not of the Romish, but of the Protestant type. The difference between the schools of Quebec and Ontario will illustrate this. In the former Province the National Schools are Roman Catholic, and Protestants have dissentient schools; in Ontario the Roman Catholics were granted the privilege of Separate Schools, because the National Schools were "offensive" to them on account of their Protestant type. In Quebec, also, certain saints' days and holidays are observed which are not observed in our Public Schools of Ontario; and the cure, priest, or officiating minister has the right of selecting books having reference to religion and morals. This may show the difference between the Roman Catholic and Protestant type of education. I will not dwell further on this, but will be satisfied by referring to one more class of facts.

In 1880 the total Public School attendance in Ontario was 483,045; High School, 12,136; Separate Roman Catholic Schools, 25,311; total, 520,492. The Roman Catholics constitute about one-sixth of the entire population; and it is entirely within the truth to say that Protestants of various denominations constitute at least three-fourths of the population. The number of Roman Catholic school children, therefore, may be about 90,000, of whom 25,311 are in Separate Schools, leaving 65,000 attending the Public and High Schools, whereas 420,000 Protestants or thereabouts are in attendance there—over five times as many. Are we then to be told that the school law is so unjust as to say that Protestants, who have more than five times the interest in these schools that Roman Catholics have, are not only not to control these schools, but must submit to the interference of the Romish Hierarchy when an Archbishop chooses to exercise his rights? If that is law we wish to know it, that Protestants may seek a remedy at once. If in 1850 and 1863 we were deceived by our Protestant leaders and politicians and "deprived of our rights," as Father Stafford asserts we were, we want to know it. If Father Stafford is right, the Protestant community generally, and Dr. Ryerson in particular, did not know what was then done; we were misled as well as wronged by the Catholic majority in 1863, and now, if not too late, we must have a remedy.

The other points in Father Stafford's letter have been so often discussed that I may pass all but one over with the single remark, that although Dr. Lynch "is recognized by Catholics as the head of the Catholic Church in this Province" (we say Roman Catholic Church), *he ought not to be so recognized by our Government*. He has civil rights as a citizen, none as the head of the Church. The Roman Catholic Church has men to represent it in the University Senate, and in the Council; with them, and not with the Archbishop, the Government should deal on behalf of Roman Catholic citizens.

The only other point to be mentioned is, in Father Stafford's language, "The Rev. Mr. Milligan says history is against us—says much against our Church. History may say what it likes in private households and in Protestant schools, but *such histories* will not be used in schools common to Catholic and Protestant alike." This is plain speech

and energetic, too. The object is evident. It is to prevent teachers from "being clothed with authority to teach anti-Papal histories at the public expense." In other words, no history, however true, if it is anti-Papal, must be taught; and to prevent this being done the Roman Catholics have obtained, and mean to hold, the control of our schools. This is where Mr. Stafford and every lover of truth must take issue. We wish to know *the truth* and to teach it to our children, no matter what Church may suffer. Mr. Stafford wishes the truth suppressed for the good of the Church and the glory of God. A truce here is impossible. Protestants must have the truth, no matter whether it be the burning of Servetus or of Huss or Hamilton; the penal laws of Connecticut or of Ireland; the crimes of a Henry VIII. or Philip of Spain; the failings of Protestant clergy or of religious orders, as faithfully depicted by historians such as Froude. We can suffer no suppression of TRUTH on account of anyone. Protestants have to be humbled as they read of the cruelties and wrongs perpetrated by their forefathers, but they do not wish their children and youth at college to grow up ignorant of that tearful past. We cannot consent to be silent concerning the glorious Reformation, the causes that led to it, and the atrocities to which the Papacy resorted to crush it with fire and sword; by perjuries and covenant-breaking. We do not charge Father Stafford with these things. We hope that Roman Catholics of to-day are better than their forefathers, as we trust that we are better than ours. But we cannot allow Mr. Stafford to put *untrue*, because defective or perverted, history into the hands of our children, and thus keep from their knowledge the real character of the Church and of the State in time past. If it is necessary in order to secure this end to have separate Protestant schools and colleges, we must have them, and let our mixed schools and colleges go. We cannot submit in our search for truth—scientific, historic, or revealed—to the Hierarchy of a Church which teaches that paltering with truth is a duty when the good of the Church requires it.

Dundas, Ont., Oct. 21, 1883.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN LAING.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Mail.

SIR,—Shall the Protestant children of Ontario receive religious instruction in the National Schools? This is a question of vital importance, and which at present is engaging the attention of our public men. I am free to admit that *politicians* of both parties answer yes or no, according as they think that they can carry a majority thereby at the coming elections. All Christian men, however, should seek to have the question practically answered in such way as shall be for the glory of God and the best interests of the nation, irrespective of the ins and outs of political parties.

Before our present system of education was introduced in 1850, religious instruction was given in all the schools of the Province, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. The Act of 1850 did not propose to do away with religious instruction. Had any such proposition been made then, the opposition which the Bill would have encountered would have prevented it becoming law. But all Christians were satisfied by clause 10,

which *seems* words: "Pu and guardian regulations n to make it p is secured to "As *Christ essential elem instruction.*" about ten ye Gradually th agitation aga Roman Cath tinued. The history which studies crow in which the time it thus d and in which given. The cases the rea of the school schools, and are entitled t

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which *seems* at least to secure their right to have religious instruction given, in these words: "Pupils shall be allowed to receive *such religious instruction as their parents and guardians desire*, according to any general regulations provided," etc. Now these regulations may be such as to secure the privilege, or to prevent the enjoyment of it, or to make it practically impossible for parents to avail themselves of the privilege which is secured to them by the law. Let us then look at the regulations, chap. 14, sec. 1, "As *Christianity* is recognized by common consent throughout this Province as an *essential element of education*, it ought to pervade all the regulations for elementary instruction." Good, all that can be desired. How then shall it be enforced? For about ten years religious instruction continued to be given in the Common Schools. Gradually the catechisms and sectarian instructions ceased. The Roman Catholic agitation against the teaching of the Protestant Bible began. In many places, to satisfy Roman Catholics, the reading of the Bible and other religious exercises were discontinued. The substitution of the new readers in 1869 took away the epitome of Scripture history which up to that time formed part of elementary instruction, and additional studies crowded out the Bible. Further, Roman Catholics in 1863 got Separate Schools, in which their children receive such religious instruction as they desire. In course of time it thus came about that in our Public Schools, supported chiefly by Protestants, and in which almost exclusively their children are taught, no religious instruction is given. The only semblance of religion is the reading of prayers, and also in many cases the reading by the teacher of a few verses of Scripture at the opening and closing of the school. Practically this is the whole amount of religious instruction given in our schools, and we are told that this is all we can properly ask. Is it, then, all that we are entitled to by law?

Are Protestant parents satisfied with this? Do they think that this is all that should and can be given in carrying out the 10th section of the school law? If the majority of our Christian parents say so, I am satisfied, and at once submit. But I am convinced that they are not satisfied, and that generally they "desire" more "religious instruction" to be given in our schools. The present agitation so signally showing itself in the deputation that waited upon the Government on the 24th inst., proves this dissatisfaction. And whereas it has even been said that the sects could not agree, the *unanimous* assent given by Anglicans, Methodists, and Presbyterians to the proposed change in the regulations, shows that Christian feeling has now risen above denominational zeal, and makes it possible to unite in an effort to have the *rights* secured to us by law put in force. No longer can the taunt be hurled at us, "You cannot agree among yourselves." We are agreed, and could agree in even more than we have asked.

But we are told that of 5,137 Public Schools reported in 1880, in 4,489 there are religious exercises. Yes; but that is not what we "parents desire." We wish our children taught to *read* the Word of God *for themselves*, to be familiar with the text, and to know and understand the facts and precepts on which Christian principles and duty are founded. Then we are told that provision is made in the regulations for ministers giving weekly religious instruction in the schools, and that we should avail ourselves of this permission. Mr. Editor, this regulation is cruel mockery. "We ask for bread and the State gives us a stone." It has been tried in a few places, but has proved impracticable. No minister can give weekly instruction to all the children of his charge. No means are available for paying a substitute; children will not stay

after school hours to receive religious instruction ; even if they did, one hour a week is utterly inadequate considering the importance of the subject ; and as the attendance must be voluntary, so no compulsion can be used to secure the learning of prescribed lessons. "Instruction" to which we have a legal right is thus not within our reach. It is evident that Protestant pupils are not allowed to receive such religious instruction as their parents and guardians "desire," and they are thus deprived of "a just and proper right" secured to them by the school law.

And why should this be? Mr. Mowat tells us that of the two millions which constitute the population of Ontario, only one in seventy is not returned as Christian, and of the Christians four-fifths, I suppose, are Protestants. But we are told, lest we should by having our children taught Christian and Biblical history and morality *offend* one man in seventy, therefore the other sixty-nine ought to allow their children to be deprived of their legal rights. And lest we may offend one in five Christians, a Roman Catholic, therefore the other four should not insist upon their rights. Is this common sense? Are we to love our neighbor better than ourselves? The law expressly says that no child shall be required "to read or study in any religious book, or to join in any religious exercise." Is not that enough? By all means let the seventieth man who is not a Christian withdraw his child ; let the Roman Catholic one-fifth either send their children to Separate Schools, where more than a third of them are now enjoying an education such as the Romish Hierarchy approves, or withdraw them from our Public Schools when religious instruction is being given. Christian Protestants claim nothing but their *rights*, their *legal* rights, when they contend for the privilege of their children receiving religious instruction during school hours.

Much has been said of the sad effects of the want of moral and spiritual training. Our youth are not receiving it. Anyone who is not hindered by prejudice knows that Churches and Sabbath Schools cannot do the work. Mr. Mowat himself says that secular education, "if you can associate it with religious and moral training, does ten times more good" than when separated from it. Looking, then, at the matter from many sides, it is to be hoped that the result of the conference of the representatives of the Protestant Churches with the Government may be that non-Christians and Roman Catholics will treat Protestant Christians fairly and justly, and allow our children to receive religious instruction in the schools. This is no question of party politics, and it will be a pity if Christian men of both parties cannot unite to lift education out of the arena of politics altogether, and so deal with it in a proper spirit, refusing to make political capital out of it. The people and schools were not made for the Government, and the Government was made for the people.

Yours, etc.,

Dundas, October 27, 1882.

JOHN LAING.

THE BISHOP'S RIGHTS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of The Mail.

SIR,—If the *Globe* tells the truth, Bishop Cleary, in a sermon preached yesterday, referred to the "Marmion" matter a second time, and said :—

"In his diocese, most of which he had visited, he had failed to find a single instance in which the Catholic Church had been tampered with by the teachers, in which an attempt had been made in the Public Schools to proselytise Catholic pupils. This was a fact which strengthened his confidence in the system. He hoped nothing would occur to alter this condition of affairs; that open hostility against Catholics would not be engendered; that peace and quiet would continue."

I was quite prepared for such a statement of fact. Shame would it be if Protestant teachers had dishonorably tampered with the religious opinions of their pupils. Protestants have no wish to use any advantage they may have to proselytise. They are tolerant and do not wish to be offensive. Doubly, too, can I reciprocate the Bishop's desire for peace, and from experience I can say that there is no fear of any "open hostility" in our schools or among neighbors if they are only let alone by those who should know better than to stir up strife. So far good. Let us go on.

"The Church, however, reserved the right to dictate in regard to the religion of her children, to make suggestions affecting their moral education. When her Bishops could not do this in the discharge of their functions and duty peace would be destroyed, and a lamentable condition of affairs exist."

I like plain speaking, and here we have it. This is decidedly intelligible, no man can mistake what the Bishop means—(1) The Church has rights; *i.e.*, the Church of Rome has rights in the conducting of our Public Schools. Has any other Church rights? Has every sect equal rights? Or, in an unsectarian system, are all sects and Churches alike without rights?

(2) The right claimed is "to dictate in regard to religion" in the Public Schools. In practice we know that means to put out any book that is "offensive" to some Roman Catholic, or is "anti-Papal," as Father Stafford phrases it. But to whom is Church to dictate? To the Government of the day to be sure. Now, I have no objections to "suggestions" from any quarter, but I most decidedly object to any "dictation" by the Government. That means that the Government must obey the dictating Church, as Minister Crooks did; and that puts the Church over the Government in civil matters—the ultramontane claim of the Papacy, the genuine article. It puts our Public Schools under the control of the Church through the Government; and thus Protestant children are subjected to the dictation of the Romish Church.

(3) This right is to be exercised through the Bishops; *i.e.*, the Romish Hierarchy, whose "function and duty" it is to supervise the moral and religious education of youth in a Christian country. Hence, whenever a Bishop chooses to dictate, the Government has nothing to do but submit and obey. Does this give us the "true inwardness" of Minister Crooks' conduct?

(4) If the exercise of this alleged right is resisted, or rather not conceded, then there will be a *casus belli*, a proper occasion of "open hostility, peace will be destroyed." There is peace now, the Bishop says, and he rejoices therein. And so long as the Government allows and obeys the dictation of the Romish Hierarchy all will be well; but if the Government ventures to refuse compliance "a lamentable condition of affairs will exist." Thanks, Bishop Cleary; you have nobly sustained Father Stafford's claim, vindicated Bishop Lynch's interference, and justified Minister Crook's obedience. Perhaps you have also opened some blind eyes, and let us see exactly how things are.

Yours, etc.,

The Mansc, Dundas, Nov. 6, 1882.

JOHN LAING.

[*N.B.*—The Church established by law in England thus protests against Popery in her 37th article :—“ The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England.” And the great Protestant oath which all clergy have to take makes them swear—“ That no foreign prince, person, prelate, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm.” The claim of Bishop Cleary is clearly antagonistic to this oath, and inconsistent with Protestant liberty].

THE “*GLOBE*” AND THE SCHOOL LAW.

To the Editor of the Mail.

SIR,—In an editorial article to-day the *Globe* reiterates in a very offensive manner statements which have been again and again called in question or disproved, as if it believed that its position on religious instruction were unassailable. Allow me to note a few points which may supplement the criticism of the article which I expect to see from your able pen to-morrow.

1. It is said the State prescribes what the education shall be that it will assist, and that that education is secular. Is this true? Is it a fact in our Ontario system of education? No. Far from it. The very opposite is the fact. In section 10 of the School Act we read: “ Pupils shall be allowed to receive such religious instruction as their parents and guardians desire.” Surely that is not saying that the instruction shall be purely secular. Surely it means that as the vast majority of parents desire their children to be instructed in the Holy Scriptures this shall be allowed. Surely the schools in which it is allowed have a legal right to recognition and assistance. Can the *Globe* give us the section that says the instruction given by teachers receiving legislative money shall be purely secular? Had the *Globe* in 1850 advocated what it now does, or proposed to exclude from our Common Schools “ religious instruction ” based on the Bible, the idea would have been all but unanimously repudiated by the whole community. There were no agnostics in those days, and the *Globe* then was unmistakably Evangelical and Protestant.

2. We are told the State must not assist in giving that instruction, *i.e.*, “ religious instruction.” Our Public Schools’ system was founded upon those principles, and is now carried on upon them. Is this true? Will the *Globe* show in any provision of the Act or preamble any such secular principle laid down? It cannot; but we find in the regulations the following:—“ As Christianity is recognised by common consent throughout this province as an essential element of education it ought to pervade all the regulations for elementary instruction.” This contradicts the *Globe’s* principle flatly. Can it own itself wrong? If not, let us try again. What are the facts? (1) In 1850 the fundamental Act of our present system recognized the denominational schools which then existed, and continued grants of public money to them in the same way as had previously been done, while not only the Bible but catechisms were taught in these schools for many years after. (2) The Act of 1850 provided for Separate Schools, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, and for assisting them, although religious instruction was given in them; these provisions, slightly amended, are in force to-day; the principle has not

been repealed. (3) The State now "assists" with public money, and maintains by taxation, 4,000 Public Schools in which religious instruction is given. (4) The Separate School Act of 1863 declares it to be "proper and just" to restore the religious teaching formerly enjoyed by Roman Catholics, and by the Act of that year and a subsequent Act in 1879 the State gave every facility for giving religious instruction in these schools, and at the same time it assists them with public money. Are not these four facts directly in the teeth of the *Globe's* assertion that the State must not assist in giving religious instruction? The *Globe's* theory says "must not," the school law says "it shall be allowed," facts say it is done. Is the *Globe* convinced that it is wrong as to fact?

3. We have been told there has been no want of success in giving religious instruction to our youth. Well, this is a matter of opinion. But surely teachers, parents, judges, magistrates, ministers, Sabbath-school teachers are as competent to form an opinion on this point as the *Globe* writer. It may suffice, then, to say that if our people generally thought that the religious instruction for the last thirty years had been satisfactory, the present agitation could not have taken place. Besides, will the *Globe* give the facts showing that in four years there has been a falling off of 300 schools in the number in which the Ten Commandments are taught? Is this success in religious instruction?

4. We are told, to introduce the Bible as proposed would be a return to Established Churchism—would it then? To have the Bible read in schools is to establish a Church in Ontario! Can anything be more absurd, any argument more dishonest? For the Minister of Education officially to acknowledge that Romish bishops have a "right" to dictate to the Government regarding what is to be taught or not taught in the Public Schools looks like establishing the Church of Rome, because the bishops are the Church administratively; but none except the *Globe* editor and those who are anxious to be fooled by him can see how reading the Bible in the schools is equivalent to establishing the Church of England, or the Church of Scotland, or the Church of Germany, or any other Church.

I think enough has been said to show that the *Globe* is all wrong as to its facts. The easiest explanation of this phenomenon is to charitably suppose that in its agnostic zeal to get rid of God's Word, the *Globe* has come to believe that the State should have nothing to do with God or Christianity; and then that Ontario is a State such as on agnostic principles it should be. It would be a pleasure to undeceive that influential journal, but it may be judicially blinded.

It may, Mr. Editor, be necessary to go yet further into this question, and to show that it is only "proper and just" to restore to Protestants "certain rights" of which Father Stafford and the *Globe* say they were deprived without their knowledge in 1850, and so put Protestants on a "perfect equality" with our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens. Personally, I prefer to have our schools non-sectarian, but Christian, both theoretically and practically, with the Bible used in them; but if the alternative must be agnostic schools or Protestant Separate Schools, then, without hesitation, I say let us have the latter, and every Christian will say amen.

Yours, etc.,

The Manse, Dundas,
November 9, 1882.

JOHN LAING.

THE BIBLE IN SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Mail.

SIR,—I see that the *Globe* is gradually giving way to public opinion on the Bible in schools question, and is finding that its agnostic position does not command the support of the Christian community. It has at last allowed two correspondents to say a word in defence of the request of the deputations made to the Premier. I hope it will continue to give its readers a chance to hear the "other side," which it has so studiously and earnestly been misrepresenting for its own ends. One or two letters like that of "A. H." will open some eyes. I rejoice in the prospect of a full and fair discussion on the subject on its own merits, and aside from party politics.

My object in taking up my pen now is to say a few things regarding the position of the *Canadian Baptist*, which is not agnostic, but, as I hope to show, is so non-religious as to endanger Christian morality. I attach importance to that position because it is sympathized in by eminent public men who feel the responsibilities of political action, such as Hon. Alex. Mackenzie, and whose opinions are justly entitled to calm and earnest consideration. The position taken there is that "the compulsory reading of the Scriptures in public schools during school hours would be (1) an infringement upon the liberty of conscience, (2) a provocation of sectarian jealousy, (3) an undesirable use of the Scriptures themselves." In answer it may be urged:—

1. That conscience is an individual matter, and as no individual parent is compelled to have his child present during the reading of the Bible, there can be no infringement of liberty in the case. If a man's conscience says he ought not to let his child hear the Bible read, that child's liberty is untouched; he may go out of school. If a man thinks that reading the Bible is a religious act, and that a State institution should never require a religious act to be performed, his child is not obliged to countenance such a religious act; no violence is done to conscience. Catholics and agnostics are not compelled to read the Bible. If the latter demand Separate Schools, as the former have, by all means let them have all their taxes to support their schools. Christians do not ask the money of agnostics to teach their children. On the other hand Christians have a right to have their children educated with their money as they deem best, and to deny that right is an infringement of our liberty by Catholics and agnostics. Agnostics are not more in number, the Premier told the deputation, than one in seventy of the population. Is the liberty of sixty-nine to be infringed upon at the call of one citizen? As for closing the teachers' office against anyone—no one has any right to be a teacher any more than to be a doctor. The right lies with parents and the trustees to choose the person they consider a fit person. And if an agnostic or a Catholic is not chosen by the parents, he has no ground of complaint any more than a Baptist or Presbyterian would have if he was not chosen. To claim a right for anyone because he has a certificate that he has a certain amount of education is simply nonsense. No rejected candidate, no matter what may have been the ground on which another has been preferred, has had his "liberty infringed" or his rights denied him. A doctor who sees another called in while he has been passed by has as much right to complain, for he also has a certificate.

2. Sectarian jealousy. All I have to say on this point is, that experience shows that in any school section where the Bible is read, and some where Biblical instruction is given, all sects are satisfied; Roman Catholics make no complaint, unless the priest,

in guiding their conscience, interferes with the children's attendance at school. The seventieth citizen, the agnostic, even does not complain. Besides, the denominations are at one in desiring the Bible to be used as it was up to 1860 as a class-book, with perfect harmony. The evil feared is imaginary. The persecution of Roman Catholic children referred to is so rare and so gentle that it is more than compensated for by the insults to which Protestant children are sometimes subjected. Such things do happen, but what statesman would make such improper conduct on the part of Roman Catholic or Protestant the ground for legislation? The idea of "the crumbling away of the barriers of prejudice" as between Romanism and Popery, or Christianity and evangelical religion, is a fond dream of politicians at which Romanists laugh and agnostics rejoice, for they believe that Protestant evangelical religion is fast passing away before "the Church" and rationalism. "The Church" will never abate her claim to educate the youth in morals and religion, and agnosticism will never be cajoled into consenting to teach that there is a God. Teachers and trustees have common sense, and can be trusted to avoid sectarian strife and the "odium theologicum" the Baptist so much fears.

3. The improper use of the Scriptures. We have no fear about the Bible even in the hands of an agnostic. What we fear is the want of it in our schools. God's Word can take care of itself if it gets a hearing, even an unfair one. As to "the most sacred truths being mangled, marred, murdered by stammering, blundering, sometimes blubbering pupils," has the Baptist never seen or heard of such terrible things being done in Sabbath Schools, aye, and even in certain pulpits when illiterate preachers find their way there? Is that a reason why the Bible should not be read in our Sabbath Schools and Churches? Away with such nonsensical special pleading. The Lord hath spoken; let our children hear His Word. He has written to us the great things of His law; let us not account them a strange thing. True, the spiritual descendants of Sadducees and Pharisees will cry out, "Crucify Him, away with Him; it is not fit that He should live in our schools." Those who crucified the incarnate Word and put Him to shame will, if they can, burn the Written Word by the hands of the common hangman, as was done in the 16th century, aye, and even in the latter half of the nineteenth. They will vilify and cast reproach upon the Book. But let it alone, give it a hearing; it will live again; it will rise from the dead to enrich with spiritual blessing the very men who, "with wicked hand," crucify afresh the Son of God and put Him to an open shame. We are a Christian nation, and the Bible underlies the law of the land.

Yours, etc.,

The Manse, Dundas, Nov. 22, 1882.

JOHN LAING.

THE GLOBE AND BIBLE IN SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Mail.

SIR,—The *Globe* makes satisfactory progress. The promoters of the use of the Bible in the schools have been in to-day's issue declared to be "well meaning, but over-zealous people." All right; "it is good to be zealously affected in a good cause."

Thanks, Mr. *Globe*, for the encouragement, and if we are "beside ourselves," like Paul in the eyes of a heathen like Festus, so much the better for the cause of truth.

The *Globe*, too, is now strong because "the proposed measure is foreign to the spirit of our Public School system." How it is so is not shown; nor, I venture to say, can it be shown. The contrary is the fact:—(1.) Up till 1860 religious instruction was generally given, and the Testament was read in most schools as a class-book. (2.) The 10th clause in the School Act provides for giving "religious instruction." (3.) The law provides for Separate Schools where denominational religious instruction can be given. (4.) The regulations declare that Christianity "as an essential element of education ought to pervade all the regulations for elementary instructions." (5.) They also require the Ten Commandments to be taught. (6.) A Scripture lesson book is the last in the list of authorized text-books. Surely the *Globe* will gracefully acknowledge that it is mistaken in saying that "the spirit of our school system is foreign" to providing for reading the Scriptures in the schools. This gradual weakening of its position in view of public opinion gives me good hope that soon it will aid the zealots in their "well-meaning efforts."

"Compulsion in matters which are matters of dispute is impracticable." Indeed! How about the establishment of free schools? That was a matter of dispute, until compulsion was used. Other instances might be given to show that compulsion makes some things practicable which without it cannot be done. But if the use of the Bible is impracticable it will not be done, and the zealots will find themselves mistaken. Will the *Globe* just help us instead of opposing, and I think it will be found practicable. If there should be exceptional cases where, with "the public opinion of their constituents on their side, the local bodies," trustees, *i.e.*, would exclude the Bible, we should have to submit; and not one of us would attempt to inflict a penalty on the offenders, for this is a free country, and our School law prescribes no penalty. In other words, there is no compulsion possible.

"As a rule those who take most interest in school matters are decidedly religious men, * * and have more interest in the moral and religious instruction of their own children and their neighbours' than the Ontario Legislature or the Department of Education can possibly have." Good again, Mr. *Globe*. I agree with you, and I think that these religious men (they are not cranks now, nor one or two restless spirits) should have their earnestly pressed claim put into effect. The Legislature has not done anything to prevent this, and the Education Department should at once modify the regulations as they have been respectfully asked to do; and the *Globe*, to please a handful of agnostics and extreme voluntaries, should not oppose these "decidedly religious men."

But why change the present "recommendatory" provision? Because (1) So long as Scripture lessons are not prescribed they hold a secondary position, and will be displaced in favor of lessons not more important, but which are prescribed. (2) When it is left to trustees to take action, experience has shown what common sense might have forecast, that the Bible will not be used as a class-book for reading, although a few verses may be read to the pupils at the opening of the school. (3) By making the reading of the Bible part of the ordinary work of the school it will be used in every school where there are not good "reasons for the omission," while at present it is used only where there are one or more "over-zealous people" to move in the matter. Does the *Globe* understand? The *Globe* need not be so very anxious about "injuring the

usefulness of the schools." The people are too intelligent to allow this to be done; for as the *Globe* itself has shown, "local bodies" will not carry out any provision that is found hurtful. It will be a blessing to those children who are taught to read God's Word, to learn the Ten Commandments, to fear God and be subject to the powers that be; and as not a scholar will be compelled to receive the blessing if his parent is so foolish as to withdraw from its influence, the *Globe* need not fear that any agnostic will have his liberty to ignore God and His revealed will in the least infringed upon. On the other hand, Christians will enjoy the just liberty of having their children taught the highest wisdom.

I hope, Mr. Editor, you will continue your efforts to educate the public generally, and the *Globe* in particular, until "the over-zealous people" succeed in giving the Bible to thousands of children who have no other way of learning concerning God and duty.

Yours, etc.,

The Manse, Dundas, Nov. 30, 1882.

JOHN LAING.

We are sometimes told that the promoters of this movement are not agreed among themselves. The following is a statement on which I think all the deputation would agree:—And surely what is proposed can be effected by united action.

THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS.

1. We do *not* ask that the Bible be made a text-book in the sense that every passage is to be critically studied or even read. Nothing can be more absurd than to propose this.

2. We do *not* ask that the use of the Bible be made *compulsory* on any child whose parent objects.

3. We do *not* ask that the teachers shall be *religious* teachers in any sense that they are not to-day

4. We do *not* ask for any change in the school *law*. Only for a change in the *regulations*.

5. We do *not* ask for anything to be done which may not at present be done by trustees and teachers.

So far for misconceptions which are being ever repeated, either designedly or from ignorance, by some men who seem to be unwilling to have our children read the Word of God during school hours.

We do ask—1. That not only shall the *teacher* read a portion of Scripture, as is now done in the majority of our Public Schools as part of a religious exercise in connection with prayers; but also *that the children be taught to read the book themselves intelligently, without comment by the teacher, or "expounding" of the passage in hand.*

2. That a *selection* be made of suitable portions to be read for the guidance of teachers. It is believed that all Protestant denominations can agree on the portions to be used, and that even Archbishop Lynch may approve of them.

3. That besides the Ten Commandments, which are now authorized and taught in many schools, other parts of Scripture may be authorized and prescribed for school work, and committed to memory.

4. That *every child whose parent objects shall be exempted* from attendance on Bible reading. No compulsion.

5. That what is now done *voluntarily in very many schools*, and which is strictly within the law, shall be made *obligatory on all schools*, and shall be more regularly, systematically, and efficiently done. Exceptional cases may be provided for by special regulation.

6. That lessons in Scripture history such as were formerly used in the Irish National readers be restored. This is not as a *substitute for*, but in addition to, the Bible.

7. We ask nothing more than has been successfully and pleasantly done in many schools in Ontario and in the Dissident Schools of Quebec, and is now being done in the Board Schools of London, England, and of Birmingham and elsewhere, with the approval and support of all denominations of Christians, and even of Prof. Huxley.

Yours, etc.,

The Manse, Dundas, Nov. 3, 1882.

JOHN LAING.





